

MARCH/APRIL 2011 Rs. 50

SPAN

American Rickshaws
Learning Globally
The Benevolent Club



Musical Connections

Mutually Beneficial Trade



PRASANNA SHETTY



State Department photo

Commerce Secretary Gary Locke led a trade mission to India of 24 high-technology American firms ready to promote exports of leading U.S. technologies and services related to civil nuclear energy, civil aviation, defense and homeland security, and information and communications technology. The mission in February included interactions with *dabbawalas* in Mumbai (top). In Bangalore, he inaugurated the U.S. pavilion at the Aero India defense aircraft trade show (above). Also present was Ambassador Timothy J. Roemer.

Locke told the Confederation of Indian Industry in New Delhi that his team at the Commerce Department, as well as the U.S. Export-Import Bank and the U.S. Trade and Development Agency, will be helping these American companies pursue new commercial opportunities in India—and helping U.S. and Indian firms integrate into one another's supply chains.

"The message I want every Indian citizen to hear this week is that U.S. businesses can work with you to achieve your ambitious development goals.... They can provide state-of-the-art technologies to modernize your electric grid and your power generating systems so you can deliver electricity to hundreds of millions of rural Indians. They can help you build the world's best planes and the roads and rail lines you need to transport Indian-made goods throughout the country and throughout the world," he said.

"I know they can do this because they've done it in the United States. They've done it around the world. And they are eager to do it in India."

For more information:

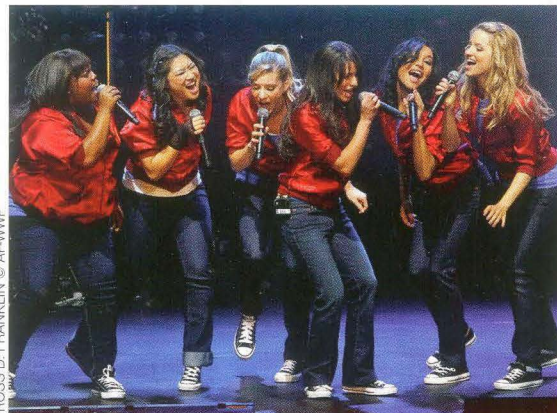
Commerce Department's India trade mission

<http://trade.gov/indiamission2011/index.asp>



Cover package

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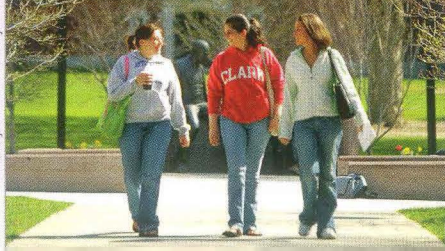
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© Getty Images

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STATEMENT FORM IV

The following is a statement of ownership and other particulars about SPAN magazine as required under Section 19D(b) of the Press & Registration of Books Act, 1867 and under Rule 8 of the Registration of Newspaper (Central) Rules, 1956

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Place of Publication: | Public Affairs Section, American Embassy
American Center 24 Kasturba Gandhi Marg
New Delhi 110001 |
| 2 Periodicity of Publication: | Bi-monthly |
| 3 Printer's Name: | Aroon Purie |
| Nationality: | Indian |
| Address: | Thomson Press India Ltd
18/35, Delhi Mathura Road, Faridabad 121007 |
| 4 Publisher's Name | Michael P. Pelletier |
| Nationality: | American |
| Address: | 24, Kasturba Gandhi Marg New Delhi 110001 |
| 5 Editor's Name | Laurinda Keys Long |
| Nationality: | American |
| Address: | 24, Kasturba Gandhi Marg New Delhi 110001 |
| 6 Name and address of individuals who own the newspaper and partners or shareholders holding more than our percent of the total capital | The Government of the United States of America |

I, Michael P. Pelletier, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief
 Date: March 08, 2011

Published by the Public Affairs Section, American Center, 24 Kasturba Gandhi Marg, New Delhi 110001 (phone: 23472000), on behalf of the U.S. Embassy, New Delhi. Printed at Thomson Press India Limited, 18/35, Delhi Mathura Road, Faridabad, Haryana 121007. Opinions expressed in this 68-page magazine do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Government

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subscriptionspan@state.gov



A LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

I think music in itself is healing. It's an explosive expression of humanity. It's something we are all touched by. No matter what culture we're from, everyone loves music." American musician Billy Joel said these words, but I know this sentiment is echoed by Indians and Americans. The love of music connects our countries and enriches our relationship.

In this issue of SPAN, we celebrate our musical connections, starting with an article on the TV series, "Glee," a hit with young American and Indian viewers. From the pop hits of Lady Gaga to the rock classics of Aerosmith, "Glee" showcases all kinds of music. Jazz continues to stand at the forefront of American popular music and resonates with fans throughout the world. This is reflected in a photo feature of American jazz artists known for their creativity and talent, including some who have performed in India. Our music package includes articles on Grammy-nominated, Indian American jazz pianist Vijay Iyer; DIVA, the all-woman jazz band; and Gaida, a singer who also helps other people find their voices as a speech therapist.

We explore cultural connections through the article on maximum INDIA. This Kennedy Center festival featured dance, musical and theatrical performances, film showings, panel discussions, and exhibitions by Indians and Indian Americans over 20 days.

This issue explores the theme of connections in other aspects, too. Rickshaws, the ubiquitous mode of transportation in India, can also be seen on the streets of New York City, Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Denver, and many other American cities. Steve Fox tells us how pedicabs are becoming a popular way of advertising in the United States and how the drivers, who work for tips instead of fares, have been paid in unusual ways—some have been offered food instead of money.

Cricket, India's national obsession, is another connection between our countries. You shouldn't be surprised, because the troops of the man who would become America's first president, George Washington, played cricket. Wendy Grossman writes about the history of cricket in America, how it's played today, and tells us that millions of American fans are watching the current World Cup. Indians and Americans share a love of books and a great example of this was seen at the Kolkata Book Fair where America was this year's theme country. Those who love books will also like to read about the Strand Book Store in New York City. It has nearly 30 kilometers of books, crammed from floor to ceiling. This iconic store has served as locations for the TV series "Sex and the City" and the movie "Julie & Julia."

Another field where Indians and Americans connect is education. Indian student Dhruv Rawat writes about his life at Brown University in Rhode Island and why he loves studying there. Shreya Biswas, who is studying at Clark University in Massachusetts, has a lot of information and advice to share with Indian students who plan to apply to U.S. colleges. The education connection extends to South Asia Centers across several U.S. universities where American students learn Indian languages as well as Indian art, cuisine, music and culture.

Michael Pellatier

Cricket

U.S. Fans and Players Are Watching

By WENDY GROSSMAN



Right: U.S. openers Carl Wright (center) and Aditya Mishra run between the wickets as Jamaica's Carlton Baugh looks on during a Pearls Cup T20 series cricket match at the Central Broward Regional Park in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Below: R. Singh, batsman for Richmond Hill, prepares to defend the wicket as a bowler from the Aviation Flyers attempts to bowl him out, during a high school cricket match in New York City.



JEFFREY M. BOAN © AP-WWP



STUART RAMSON © AP-WWP

1948

1965

1987

Right: The first international cricket match, depicted in this drawing, took place in what is now Central Park in New York City.

Below: Trinidad and St. Lucia face off in New York's Van Cortlandt Park.

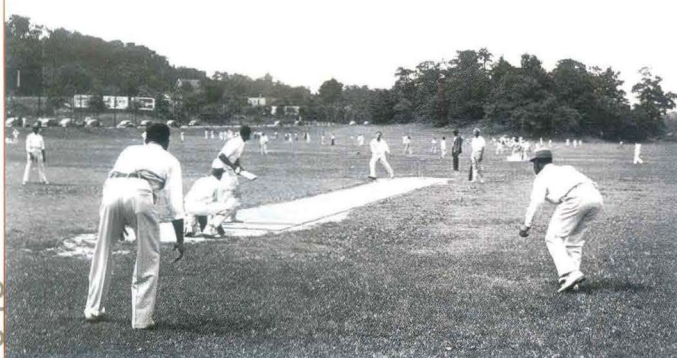
Below center: Eddie Phillips of Brighton, England, hits the ball during an exhibition game on a St. Louis, Missouri street. The wicket keeper is Tom Alford of St. Louis.

Bottom: A cricket match in Van Nuys, California, organized by the Southern California Cricket Association.

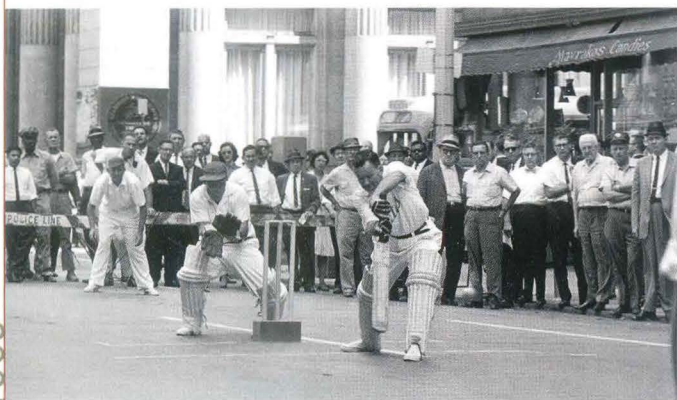


Courtesy Rohit Kulkarni

1844



ED FORD © AP/WWP



TED WATERS © AP/WWP



BOB MILLER © AP/WWP

With the 10th Cricket World Cup underway, millions of fans and thousands of players who live in the United States are watching.

People have played cricket in the United States since the country was a British colony. The troops of the man who would become the nation's first president, George Washington, played cricket. The grandfather of the nation's third president, Thomas Jefferson, played cricket. Today, there are more than 100,000 active cricket players in America, says Rohit Kulkarni, director of the documentary film, "Pitch of Dreams: Cricket in America."

"After about 200 years since its introduction in the U.S., cricket remains an underground movement—a well-kept sporting secret," says Kulkarni, 35. "People from cricket-playing countries, when they think of the U.S., they don't think of cricket. They think of football and baseball and basketball. No one thinks that people actually play cricket in the U.S."

When Kulkarni moved to America from India, he had no idea there were millions of other cricket fans in the country. He grew up in Pune and says he started playing cricket when he was 3. When he moved to Carbondale, Illinois, in the American Midwest, he found himself missing cricket.

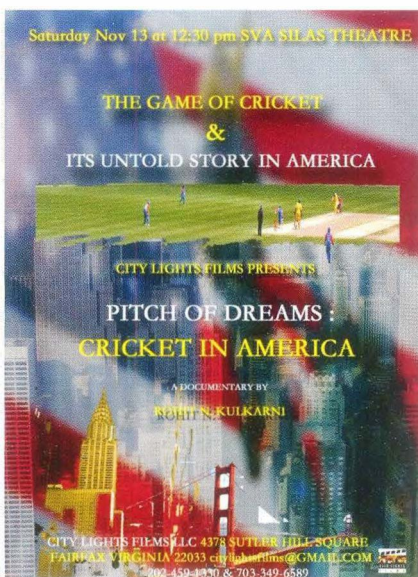
But the more he looked around, the more he found the game he loves. "I saw players everywhere in the U.S.," he says.

There are 15 to 20 million cricket fans in the United States, says John L. Aaron, secretary of the USA Cricket Association. Aaron grew up in Guyana where his father was a cricket commentator and his brother was once captain of the national cricket team.

"The whole world is becoming a smaller place—we live in a virtual world," he says. "It's part of the DNA of the expatriate. They've grown up in these cricket-playing countries."

The 2011 World Cup started February 19, hosted by India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. For the last World Cup, in 2007, India had the most television viewers. "But guess who was the second-largest viewership of cricket? The United States," Aaron says. "It's unheralded and nobody knew."

In 2008, Kulkarni bought a video camera and started learning how to shoot and edit film at school; he now works as a multimedia producer for Voice of America. He started research into



Left: Publicity poster for "Pitch of Dreams," shown at film festivals across America.

For more information:

Pitch of Dreams: Cricket in America

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BHB9QoGSPxo>

USA Cricket Association

<http://usaca.org/>

United States Youth Cricket

<http://usyca.org/category/schools-program/>

the history of cricket in America. The more he read, the more fascinated he became.

"I realized there is literally cricket everywhere in the U.S.—and people are quite serious about it," he says.

Soon, he was spending every weekend traveling at his own expense around the country, researching and shooting his documentary. He traveled from San Francisco to Chicago, New York to Miami.

"I combined my passion for the sport and for filmmaking," he says. "I bought the equipment on my own, I travelled on my own. I did it on my own."

In Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Kulkarni filmed at the only International Cricket Council-approved stadium in the United

States. In New York City, he shot a nationwide kids' cricket tournament. In Philadelphia, he went to a cricket library, filled with historic bats and balls.

As he made the film, what surprised him most was the long history of cricket in the United States. For example, he says, he didn't know that cricket was once played on the White House lawns. He was also surprised to learn that the first three members of the National Baseball Hall of Fame were also cricket players. The National Baseball Hall of Fame is planning a Cricket Weekend in June to highlight its newest exhibit, on the relationship between baseball and cricket.

"Before baseball became baseball, it was cricket," Kulkarni says. "Cricket was the number one team sport in the country. Since the U.S. was looking for its own identity, I guess baseball evolved and cricket went down. But thanks to the immigrant community, cricket is coming back."

When Kulkarni lived in Baltimore, Maryland, he watched the

A match between United States (in blue) and Jamaica at Fort Lauderdale Stadium in Florida.





© Getty Images

Left: A cricket match in progress in Los Angeles, California, below the Hollywood sign.

Below: York Cricket Club batsman Raj Singh Bhangu keeps an eye on the ball during practice as wicket keeper Anand Modali waits for the throw during a match in York, Pennsylvania.

2003 Cricket World Cup matches at Johns Hopkins University with hundreds of other fans.

"There used to be 400 students watching the cricket match," he says. "There were people from India, Pakistan, Afghanistan—everyone getting together, eating and watching a cricket game throughout the night."

Kulkarni's goal in making the film—which has been shown at film festivals in the United States—was to raise awareness of the sport. And he wants people who don't understand the game to learn the rules.

"So now, if someone says, 'I went to India and the only thing I saw on TV was cricket—what...is it?' I can say, 'Take a copy of my documentary, and you'll understand,'" he says.

Freelance journalist Peter Della Penna, based in New Jersey, lives and breathes cricket as he covers the sport for multiple Web sites. But watching Kulkarni's movie, he learned more. "I was enlightened," he says. The movie shows not only the history of cricket in the U.S., but its potential for the future, he says.

"It's not embedded in the daily lives of most people like it is in countries like Australia or India or England, where it's on the front page of the sports pages," he says. "We have baseball, basketball, football, hockey and soccer and then golf, tennis, boxing, horse racing and lacrosse. There are a lot of options here. Cricket is about 12th or 13th down, which is not where it should be, ideally. It hasn't really breached that mainstream."

Which means cricket has room to grow in popularity, Della Penna says. "It's confined to the expatriate community from the West Indies or South Asia. So 99 percent of people playing cricket in this country are from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Jamaica or Guyana. You have a lot of first-generation immigrants playing the game."



JOHN PAVONCELLO & AP/WIDEWORLD Dispatch

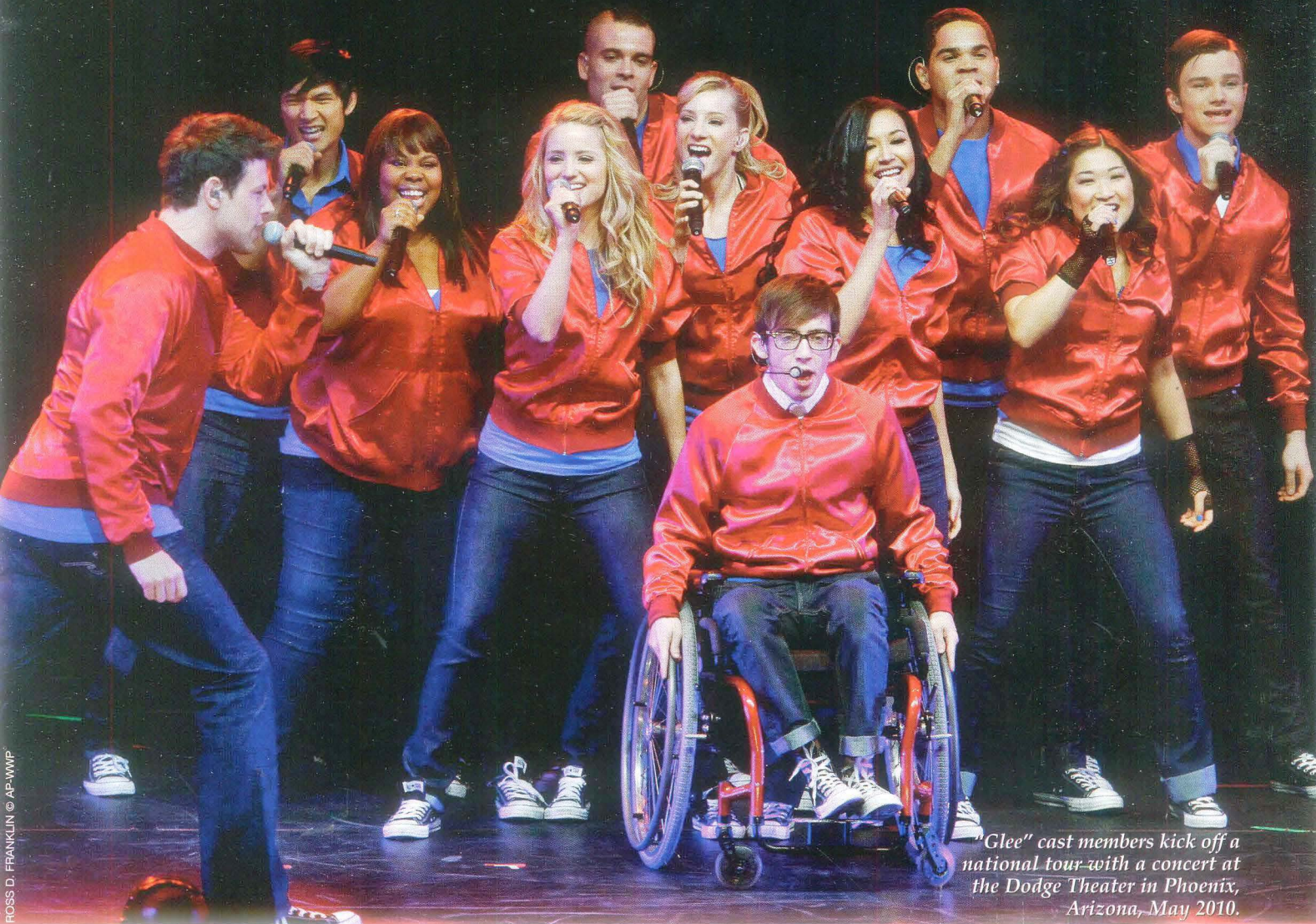
But Della Penna himself is an example of how those demographics can change. Della Penna grew up playing ice hockey and tennis, and comes from a long line of fans of the New York Giants professional football team. He didn't know anything about cricket until he studied in Australia and saw cricket on the front page of the sports sections, and decided if he was going to fit in, he needed to learn the rules.

"I dedicated myself to it and became obsessed with it," he says. "Ever since I stumbled into cricket it's taken over."

Kulkarni is hoping that his film will encourage even more people to love cricket.



Wendy Grossman is a special correspondent with America.gov.



"Glee" cast members kick off a national tour with a concert at the Dodge Theater in Phoenix, Arizona, May 2010.

America's Musical Sensation

From the pop hits of Lady Gaga to the rock classics of Aerosmith, American musical TV drama "Glee" embraces all kinds of music and is *totally* addictive.

By KAITLIN MCVEY

When American folk legend Bob Dylan gravitated toward rock 'n' roll in 1965, he famously stated, "The only place where it's happening is on the radio and records. That's where the people hang out."

In 2011, the new musical series "Glee" has embraced Dylan's prescient vision of pop music as a place where people can hang out. As last season's unexpected success story, and this season's most anticipated show, "Glee" has become a cult phenomenon on its way to becoming an American obsession.



CHRIS PIZZELLO © AP/WWP



CHARLIE KRUPA © AP/WWP



ROSS D. FRANKLIN © AP/WWP



MATT STROSHANE © AP/WWP



MARK J. TERRILL © AP/WWP

Above: "Glee" cast member Lea Michele sings "America the Beautiful" before the Super Bowl game in Arlington, Texas in February 2011.

Above right: "Glee" fans arrive for a concert to kick off a national tour of the TV series in Phoenix, Arizona.

Right: Amber Riley from "Glee" performs at Disney's Magic Kingdom theme park in Lake Buena Vista, Florida.

"Glee" is an American musical comedy drama that airs on Fox Network. The TV series focuses on a student show chorus, also known as a glee club, set within the fictional William McKinley High School in Lima, Ohio. Entertainment Weekly featured the musical series on its cover in October 2009, dubbing it, "TV's Happiest Hour." With about 8 million fans, commonly referred to as "Gleeks," tuning in every Tuesday night, there is no denying that "Glee" has become a huge success in the U.S. TV market.

Part of that success is because of its open acceptance of all types of music as well as people. From the pop hits of Lady Gaga to the rock classics of Aerosmith and the soul R&B of Syreeta, akin to MTV in its prime, "Glee" will showcase anything and everything. Coupled with the diversity of music,

the show embraces the uniqueness of the individual. Alessandra Stanley of The New York Times called the show "blissfully original in a witty, imaginative way," saying the characters are "high school archetypes" but noted "a strong satiric pulse that doesn't diminish the characters' identities or dim the showmanship of a talented cast."

While the main characters include cheerleaders, nerds, jocks and Goths, there is a strong emphasis on being true to one's own identity, even if it is as an outcast. A classic episode, and one of my favorites, is "The Rocky Horror" themed episode which was directed by Adam Shankman. He also directed the musical comedy film "Hair-spray." In the episode, the Glee coach, Will Schuester, played by Matthew Morrison, explains the '70s glam rock musical to the students by saying, "It was for outcasts, people on the fringes who had no place left to go but were searching for someplace, anyplace, where they felt like they belonged."

Entertainment Weekly noted that the show was "snarky, theatrical and totally addictive," which my friend Jimmy Morrison can attest to. Morrison, a 32-year-old Gleek, was a "fan since before the first episode. I

For more information:

"Glee"

<http://www.fox.com/glee/>

"Glee" throws lifeline to music industry

<http://abcnews.go.com/Entertainment/wireStory?id=12379420>

loved the music and the concept on the commercials promoting it months before it made its debut. I ended up watching every promo I could find on YouTube prior to the first show." He liked the show from the very start since he "was a somewhat geeky band and choir kid in high school. I have loved musicals since I was very young. I watched the movie 'Annie' so many times the VHS tape wore out and my Mom had to buy it twice."

Morrison's favorite character on the show is Rachel Berry, played by Lea Michele, because he "loves watching her take tiny steps toward the realization that the world does not revolve around her. I like watching the characters evolve and better themselves, even if it's only in a fictional story. I'm also fond of Kurt's storyline because I think it relates to what so many gay and lesbian youth experience on a daily basis in high schools and middle schools across the country." He finds Sue Sylvester, the cheerleader coach at the high school and Glee Club's arch nemesis, "very flat and predictable." He is holding out optimistically, though, since he "has seen glimmers of hope in the episode featuring her sister with Down Syndrome, and in a recent episode where she let her guard down to sing with hospitalized children. Hopefully, the show's writers will find more opportunities to expand upon that aspect of her character."

While I agree with Morrison that the storylines and characters are entertaining and mirror real-life challenges, I find that I tune in every Tuesday for one reason: for me, "Glee" is a happy hour that comes once a week. It has been a long time since there has been a creative alternative to the hours of prime-time programming devoted to life-and-death medical dramas or crime investigations. It is refreshing to watch a show featuring high school kids singing and dancing, and while their characters are sometimes slightly over the top, each one is brimming with heart and uniqueness.




Kaitlin McVey is a writer living in Seattle, Washington.

Left: "Glee" cast members Jenna Ushkowitz and Kevin McHale perform during the Fulfillment Fund's Stars Benefit Gala in Beverly Hills, California in November 2010.

Below: Cast and crew members of "Glee" with the award they won for Best Television Series—Comedy or Musical at the Golden Globes in Beverly Hills in January 2011.





Songstress Combines Music and Therapy

By M. SCOTT BORTOT

Singer Gaida is also a composer, voice coach and speech therapist.

American singer Gaida is all about the voice. Not just her voice, but helping others to find their voices as well. Born in Germany and raised in Syria, Gaida is a New Yorker, and it shows in her music. A rave review in *Time Out New York* said her debut album, "Levantine Indulgence," is "a song sequence of alluring beauty, is steeped in the traditional music of her Syrian heritage, but also shows the eclectic worldview of a New York singer-songwriter."

Gaida, who in 2006 began performing professionally in New York City, caught the ear of Oscar-winning director Jonathan Demme. Gaida and her ensemble recorded music for his 2007 documentary "Jimmy Carter: Man from Plains." She also sang for Demme's 2008 film "Rachel Getting Married" and appears in a few scenes.

Gaida and her band improvised music for scenes in "Man from Plains." "We went to the studio without any preparation," Gaida says. "Jonathan Demme would show us footage from the film in the control room, then ask us to go to the recording room and play what we feel about the scene, or we improvise along the music that we heard for the first time."

While in the studio, she listened to Alejandro Escovedo and his band playing "By Eleven," one of the songs in the movie. "I was inspired enough to come up with a verse with Arabic lyrics

and complementary melody,” Gaida says. For the Gillian Welch song “Look at Miss Ohio,” she says she was “inspired to sing parts of the Syrian folk song ‘Almaya’ for one of the verses. The amazing part [was] that it worked. You can hear both songs on the soundtrack of the film.”

Film work aside, much of Gaida’s music stems from everyday experiences. “Bint Elbalad,” the final track of “Levantine Indulgence,” is inspired by the women of Damascus.

“Syrian women are very beautiful and powerful,” Gaida says. “They are hard working, highly educated and brave and yet continue to be tender, loving and genuine.”

While “Bint Elbalad” highlights the Arabic music influence on the album, “Illak Shi” underscores how musicians such as American jazz legend Ella Fitzgerald have affected Gaida.

To complement her vocal talent, Gaida searched intensely for the right musicians. Gaida, who composes and writes lyrics, says it is easy to locate musicians in New York because of the vibrant Arabic music scene, but finding the right ones takes time. Those who show the most creativity join her ensemble.

“The main thing for me is that the musician is able to improvise in any situation,” she says. “A lot of times I take away the music sheets. They may not like it, but I know they can do without it.”

Apparently, music is in her genes. Gaida says her mother’s singing voice is “one of the most beautiful,” and her grandfather sang and played the qanun at home. It doesn’t take long for the music to start at family gatherings in Damascus.

“All of a sudden you start hearing music, [and there is] dancing and clapping and singing,” Gaida says. “It has always been a very musical family.”

Even as a toddler, Gaida wanted to be a singer. Growing up in Damascus, she would listen to Fairuz’s enchanting voice daily on the morning radio. Despite her yearnings to be a singer, her father had different plans. A caring parent, Gaida’s father saw a stable future for her as a doctor, not an artist. Gaida chose Michigan’s Wayne State University, where she studied biological sciences.

At Wayne State, Gaida couldn’t contain what she calls her music “itch” and enrolled in music courses. “My father had no problem with me studying music and singing in classes,” Gaida says.

After graduation, she stayed in Michigan and worked in public health at the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services while singing occasionally with local bands. In 2001, Gaida relocated to New York to pursue a career as a biology teacher.

During the teaching certification process, she took a job with a state-run program that provides health services for newborns to 3-year-olds. With the ability to speak Arabic and English fluently, Gaida served as an interpreter between speech pathologists and other health services providers and the Arabic-speaking children and their families.

“I saw how those children are struggling with speech pathol-

ogists who don’t speak their language,” Gaida says. Even with interpretation, most children were not connecting well to their therapists, and mothers felt isolated because materials and therapeutic homework were in English.

The children’s struggle touched Gaida so much that she decided to pursue a career in speech and language pathology and studied at Columbia University’s Teachers College. Today, Gaida is the director of speech pathology for a New York City rehab center where she helps adults with voice, speech and language impairments while continuing to work with children in the early intervention program.

Gaida also coaches professional singers on how to treat their voices. “As a singer, it is so much fun to provide voice therapy,” Gaida says. “Being a speech pathologist also helped me understand better my own singing voice and how to use it and take care of it.”



Gaida performs with the Two Rivers band at the Lincoln Center in New York City in 2009.

Singing satisfies an innate desire to express her emotions. Gaida says she feels compassion for those who suffer and expresses this by singing. Performing live is where she feels most at home.

“It is the only place where I am not awkward. The only place where I am 100 percent comfortable is when I stand on the stage,” she says. “It is my place. It is where I should be.”

In a review of a concert marking the release of “Levantine Indulgence” at Manhattan’s Le Poisson Rouge, Time Out New York said, “Few singers in New York or the world-music scene are as effusive or charming as Syrian songstress Gaida,” and “Given the outpouring of love from the [Le] Poisson Rouge audience, we suspect we’re not alone in our opinion.”

Gaida says she will keep writing music for movie scenes and for self-expression and eventually might write enough for another album. Meanwhile, Gaida will continue enchanting audiences with her blend of Arab- and American-influenced music.

“I call my music New York Arabic music,” Gaida says. “It is like me: I am an Arab New Yorker.”

M. Scott Bortot is a staff writer with America.gov.

For more information:

Gaida

<http://gaidamusic.com/>

<http://www.myspace.com/gaidamusic>

All-Woman JAZZ Band Breaks

By MICHAEL GALLANT

If an American music lover from the 1940s heard a performance by the DIVA Jazz Orchestra in 2011, the music would sound very familiar, but the 15 musicians playing the intricate tunes with a mix of trumpets, trombones, bass, drums, piano and saxophones would be a big surprise.

All of the DIVA Jazz Orchestra players are women.

The world of jazz big bands is traditionally a male-dominated one, its style made famous by musical luminaries like Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway and Count Basie. But the DIVA Jazz Orchestra, led by New York drummer and arranger Sherrie Maricle, has caused a significant splash both because of its all-female lineup and the high quality of musicianship fans say they hear at every concert.

The band is international, and has included members from Australia, Austria, Germany, Italy, Israel and Japan. Through their touring and recording, Maricle and DIVA preserve a classic form of American music while innovating—and dismantling stereotypes in the process.

Maricle says she found her calling at age 11 when she saw drummer Buddy Rich perform with his Killer Force orchestra. “My eyes were saucers,” Maricle told *The New York Times* in 2004. “I had no idea someone could play the drums with such intensity and power. The passion I felt cannot be manufactured. It can only be unleashed. Buddy Rich triggered something that was there, deep inside of me. I knew immediately I would be a jazz drummer.”

The Buffalo, New York, native practiced drums privately in her basement and began her profes-

sional performing career while a student at Binghamton University in New York. Maricle later moved to New York City, where she earned a master’s degree in jazz performance and a doctorate in jazz performance and composition from New York University.

In 1990, Maricle met Rich’s manager, Stanley Kay, after a concert in New Haven, Connecticut. “I was playing drums in a pickup band and he liked what I was doing,” Maricle says. “He had decided that he wanted to help create something unique, not just another band of good musicians. So he asked me, ‘Do you know any women who play as well as you do?’”

Inspired by the idea of an all-female ensemble, Kay and Maricle auditioned 40 women from around the world, settling on 17 players. DIVA performed their first concert at New York University on March 30, 1993. Since then, the orchestra has played at New York’s Carnegie Hall, on national television and at jazz festivals around the world; 10 albums from DIVA, as well as smaller incarnations of the group, have earned the ensemble critical acclaim.

For Maricle, musical success as a big band stems from multiple sources. “In the same tradition as all of the unique, big band sounds of the past—Count Basie, Woody Herman and Buddy Rich, for example—the key was not just having great musicians, but having great musical arrangements to play,” she says. “Just like the Duke Ellington band did, we have our arrangers write music specifically with the members of DIVA in mind, so they can play to their strengths.”

Is playing with an all-female group different from working with other ensembles? “People always ask that,” says Maricle, laughing. “There’s no difference in quality of musicianship. But one difference is that DIVA members aren’t afraid to be vocal in support of each other on stage and in life. Sometimes, I’ve seen male musicians be very stoic and afraid to express themselves. In DIVA, we’re all very supportive of each other.”

Maricle recalls an article about DIVA that encapsulated the group’s initial struggle to be taken seriously. “One reviewer went so far as to write, ‘The last thing I wanted to do on a Saturday night was hear an all-girl band play a watered-down version of ‘In The Mood,’ but my wife dragged me there—and boy was I wrong.’ Once he heard us play, he realized that we were a serious band playing real, complex music, and we won him over.”

For more information:

DIVA

<http://www.divajazz.com/about.html>

“If I Only Had a Brain”

<http://www.divajazz.com/video.html>

Jazz in America

<http://www.jazzinamerica.org/>



Stereotypes



Above: Jammi Dauber (from left, wearing black), Noriko Ueda, Janelle Reichman, Tomoko Ohno and Sherrie Maricle. Left: Sherrie Maricle (standing) and the DIVA jazz orchestra.

Maricle feels that the band now receives the respect it deserves. "These days, we're welcomed with open arms for sure," she says. "We had to prove ourselves at the beginning, but it's different now."

"Early on, people were interested in seeing what an all-woman band could do,"

she continues. "But in the last 10 years, they've been more interested in seeing what a big band can do. There aren't many touring big bands left, since they're so expensive to run. Even up through the 1980s, there were 'ghost bands' which would tour even after their founders had passed away. Now there are very few touring groups like that anymore, simply because of the crush of the economy."

As a result of her work as business-woman, band leader, arranger and musi-

cian, Maricle has discovered that her efforts continue to inspire new generations of female jazz musicians. "I have members in my band who are in their early 20s and saw DIVA when they were little," she says. "They've told me, 'You changed my life. I never knew women could do this.'"

Michael Gallant is the founder and chief executive officer of Gallant Music. He lives in San Francisco.

JAZZ From an Indian American Perspective

By MICHAEL GALLANT

Jazz pianist Vijay Iyer
didn't start out to be a
musician, but studied
physics.

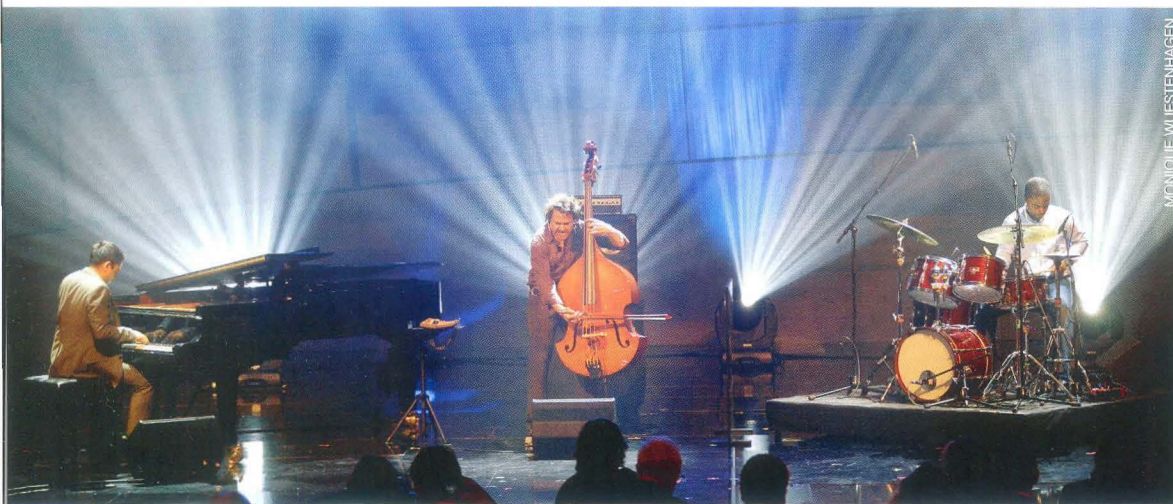
For many musicians, playing the fearless jazz improvisations of American pianist Thelonious Monk and the undulating rhythmic intricacies of Carnatic music from southern India might seem like an odd combination, but for Indian American jazz pianist Vijay Iyer, it is second nature.

When he is not touring the world, Iyer lives with his family in New York, where he records and performs regularly and teaches music to students at New York University, The New School university and the Manhattan School of Music. His 16 albums range from solo piano performances to intricate trio, quartet and quintet interpretations, as well as more unconventional groupings. The 2004 album, "In What Language?" for example, combines jazz influences with hip-hop and a spoken-word performance by poet Mike Ladd, drawing on musical traditions from South Asia and Africa. Iyer says he and Ladd created the song-cycle album as an examination of diversity and tolerance for the post-September 11 world.

Iyer wasn't always set on being a musician; he holds a master's degree in physics from Yale College as well as an interdisciplinary doctorate in technology and the arts that he earned at the University of California, Berkeley. Iyer sees an overlap between his scientific background and his musical creativity: He understands the physics behind music and examines the engineering inherent in creating a musical composition.

Prolific and successful as he is, Iyer was not always widely accepted as a pianist or composer. But through a commitment to writing music that melded his influences—





MONIQUE WUESTENHAGEN



ALAN NAHIGIAN

Indian and American, especially—Iyer has found a new pathway in American jazz, helping to open the door for new generations of adventurous artists.

A new perspective

Iyer was born in Albany, New York, in 1971 and released his first album, “Memorphilia,” in 1995. For many years, jazz listeners and critics didn’t know what to make of his music. In fact, during the first decade of his career, Iyer felt that he was seen as a marginal artist because he and his music were unlike what audiences were used to.

“When people see difference, they can get blinded or deafened by that perception of difference,” Iyer says. “I’m not complaining; that was just my experience. If you’re doing something that’s a little bit against the grain or pushing the envelope or offering something new, then you’re always on the margins of acceptance.”

Iyer isn’t the only musician of South Asian descent to break stereotypes and make waves in the world of jazz; frequent Iyer

collaborators include saxophonist Rudresh Mahanthappa, guitarist Rez Abbasi, and guitarist Prasanna, who, like Iyer, has been working with Carnatic and jazz music in the United States since the 1990s. “There are also quite a few players around who are a decade or more younger than us,” Iyer says, naming percussionists Sunny Jain, Qasim Naqvi and Ravish Momin; vocalists Sachal Vasandani and Samita Sinha; guitarist Rafiq Bhatia; and trumpeter Suresh Singaratnam. “They’ve all very recently, in the last few years, started to hit their stride.”

He urges other musicians to share their creative work and encourages them to avoid paying much attention to what critics say, negative or positive. “The biggest impact a musician can have is by performing. Reviews are very ephemeral, but the feeling you put into people by being in the same space with them and playing music for them cuts so much deeper.”

Global influences and global recognition

By recording and touring for more than a decade, Iyer has earned a growing community of fans around the world. With the release of some of his latest work, he has also earned a stellar reputation in the American jazz community.

His work is no longer seen as a curiosity, but as innovative.

“Stunning. ...This is one of the best recordings of the year from one of our most exciting artists,” writes DownBeat magazine of Iyer’s 2009 album, “Historicity.”

An August 2010 Los Angeles Times article states: “If you want to know where jazz is in 2010 and where it’s headed, Iyer is among the first musicians to hear.”

Though critics now herald his work as adventurous, complex and genre-bending, for Iyer, the formula is simple. “I was just...creating based on what I knew, what I’d studied and who I’d studied with,” he says. “That includes pianist Thelonious Monk, who to me is one of the authors of jazz, period. It also includes Carnatic music.”

Iyer keeps a level head about his success. “I’ve been doing a lot of what I want to do,” he says. “I’ve worked hard, made many albums, and some of them have had a pretty big impact, which is more than I expected. It’s opened doors for me. I feel blessed.”

Michael Gallant is the founder and chief executive officer of Gallant Music. He lives in San Francisco.

For more information:

Vijay Iyer

<http://www.vijay-iyer.com/>

Vijay Iyer: About “Solo”

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4-XCv-Xk0Ew>



LYNNE HARTY

Left: Nitin Mitta (from left), Vijay Iyer and Prasanna, who formed the group, Tirtha. Above left and above: The Vijay Iyer Trio. Right: Vijay Iyer.



HANS SPECKENBRINK



JAZZ

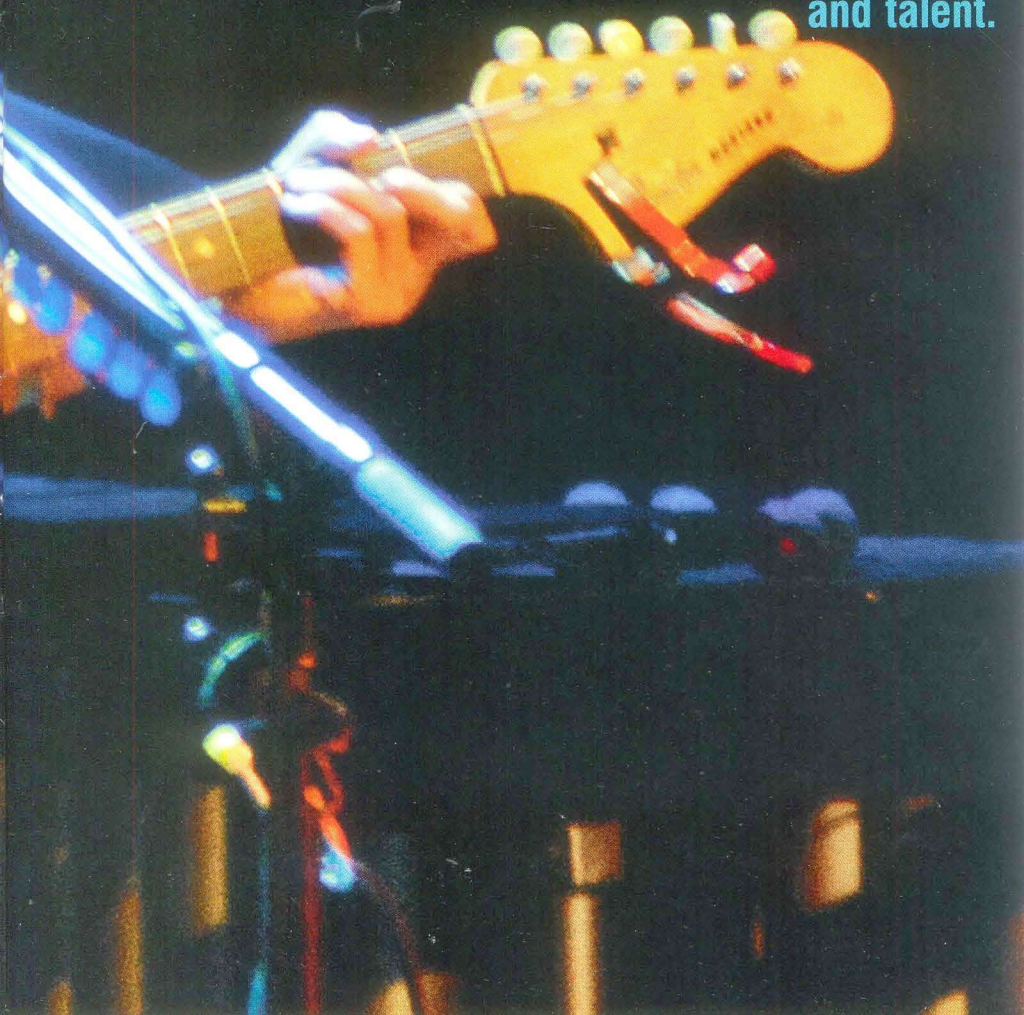
in America

Jazz continues to stand at the forefront of American popular music and resonates with musicians and fans throughout the world. SPAN presents a selection of American jazz artists known for their creativity, sophistication and talent.



Above: Benny Goodman and his sextet perform on the steps behind the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. in 1963.

Left: American singer and songwriter Norah Jones performs at a concert during the International Istanbul Jazz Festival in Turkey.





Left: Postage stamps commemorating jazz musicians were unveiled during The Monterey Jazz Festival in California in 1995.



ED BAILEY © AP/Wide World

Below: Jazz trumpeter-vocalist Chet Baker plays for journalists in Florence, Italy in 1961. He battled drug addiction, but his distinctively sad tone was unduplicated.

Below: "Hard bop" drummer Art Blakey played with many of his era's leading jazz stars, and founded the Jazz Messengers.

Above: Ella Fitzgerald, known as the First Lady of Song, performs in New York's Carnegie Hall in 1989.



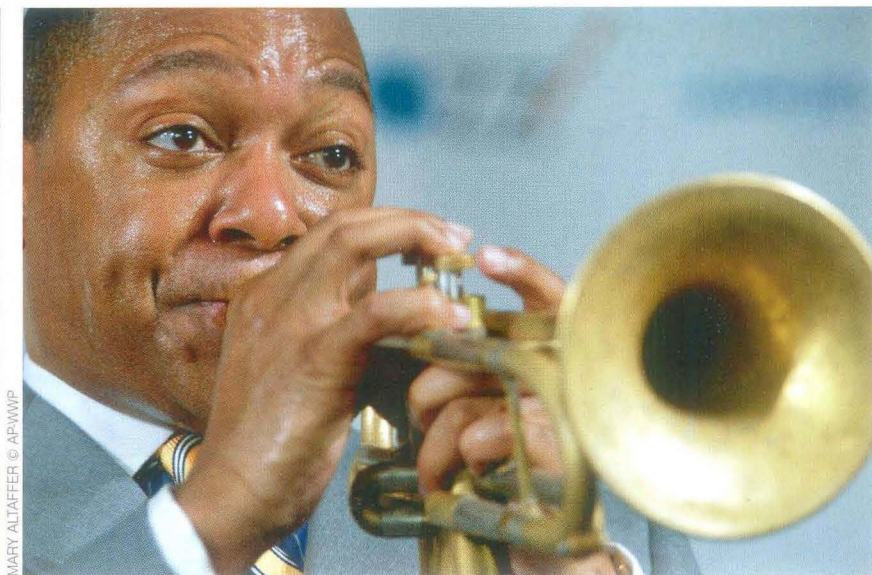
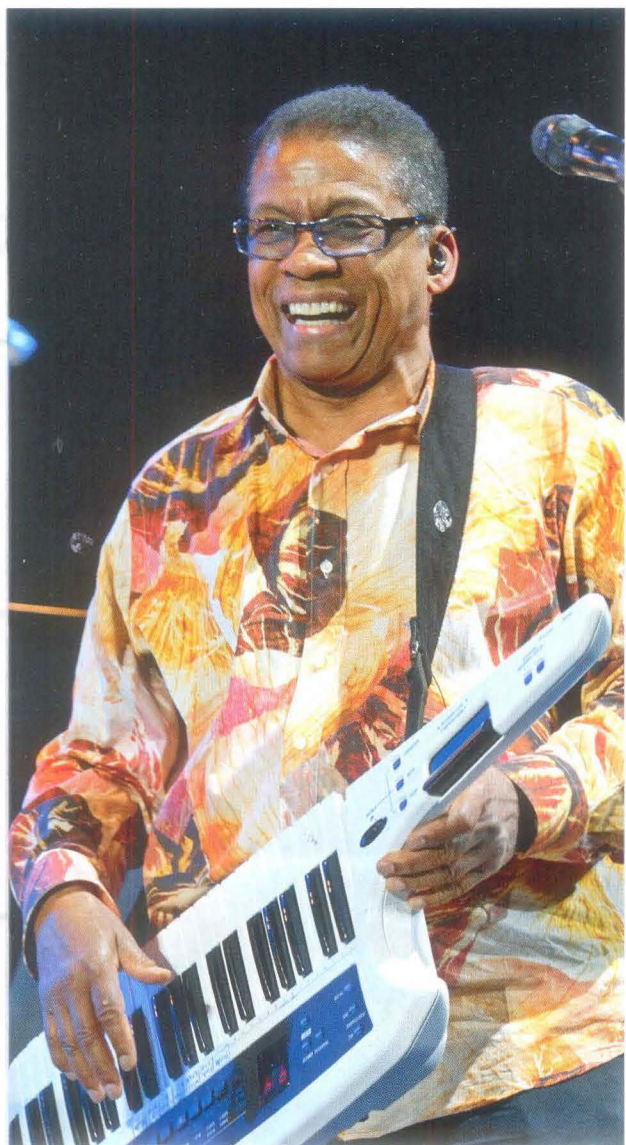
GIULIO TORRINI © AP/Wide World



© AP/Wide World



ORVILLE MYERS © AP/Wide World/The Monterey County Herald

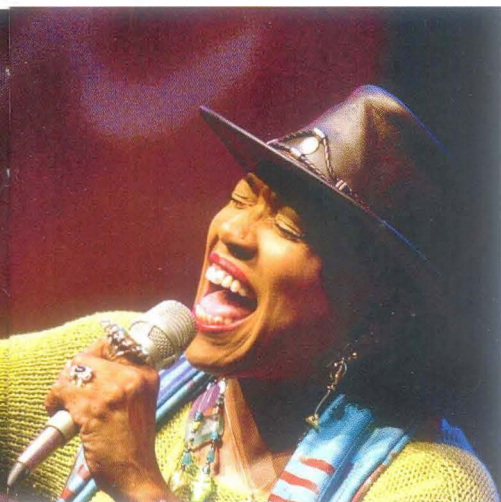


Below: Dee Dee Bridgewater performs at the Monterey Jazz Festival in California in 2009.

Above: Herbie Hancock, shown performing at a jazz festival in Kiev, Ukraine in 2010, last performed in India in 2009.

Top: Wynton Marsalis, a contemporary champion of "traditional" and "classical" jazz, plays the trumpet at a Washington, D.C. press conference.

Above: President Bill Clinton plays the saxophone with Lionel Hampton on the keyboard (right) in 1998 during a White House celebration in honor of Hampton's 90th birthday.



For more information:

Jazz in America

http://www.america.gov/multimedia/photogallery.html#/30145/jazz_gallery/

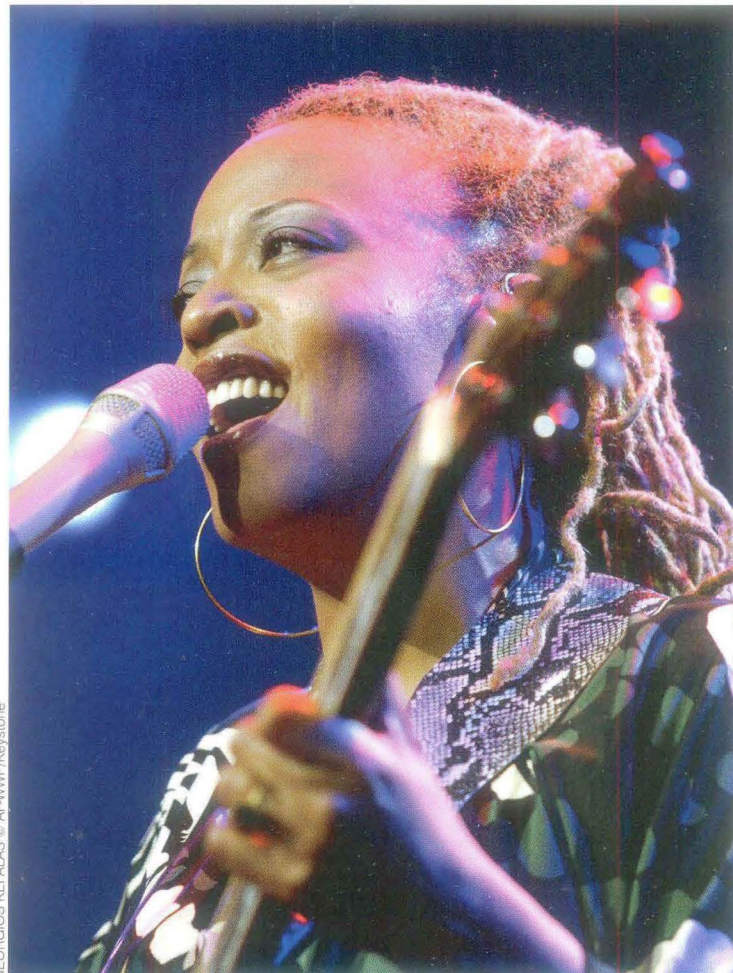
Below: Ornette Coleman (front), initiated the "free jazz" style, which abandoned fixed harmonic patterns to permit greater improvisation. He is shown performing with his quartet in Skopje, Macedonia in 2006.



Above: Esperanza Spalding performs at the Newport Jazz Festival at Fort Adams State Park in Rhode Island in 2008.



BORIS GRDANOSKI © AP/WIDEWORLD



Right: Grammy Award-winning jazz singer Cassandra Wilson in Basel, Switzerland in 2006.

GEORGIO KEFALAS © AP/WIDEWORLD/Keystone

Guitarist Pat Metheny plays at Tivoli Gardens during the 2006 Copenhagen Jazz Festival in Denmark.



JOHN MCCONNICO © AP/WWP



JEAN-JACQUES LEWY © AP/WWP



© AP/WWP



RAY STUBBLEBINE © AP/WWP



CARLOS RENE PEREZ © AP/WWP

Above: Charlie Parker (left) and Russell "Big Chief" Moore perform on the opening day of the International Jazz Festival in Paris, France in 1949.

Above: Thelonius Monk, one of the most inventive pianists of any musical genre, helped usher in the bebop revolution in the 1940s. Here he performs at a New York nightclub in 1949.

Above: Trumpeter Miles Davis stood at the forefront of multiple jazz revolutions, from 1950s "cool jazz" to 1970s jazz-rock-funk fusion. Here he performs at New York's Lincoln Center in 1985.

Above: Stan Getz pioneered the West Coast "cool jazz" style and later introduced U.S. audiences to the Brazilian-inflected Bossa Nova. He is shown playing his saxophone at the Kool Jazz Festival in New York in 1982.

[illegible]

Photographs courtesy Kennedy Center



SUSANA MILLMAN

maximum INDIA was the center's biggest

Valli is a dancer and choreographer in the Bharatanatyam tradition. "Now, as

Washington's National Symphony Orchestra gave three performances. One was a composition written especially for the fes-



From top, clockwise: Rhythm of Rajasthan; rapper Panjabi MC; tabla player Suphala; the blues band Soulmate; bracelets set with diamonds and rubies from Jaipur's Gem Palace; rock band Parikrama; the Nrityagram Dance Ensemble; tabla player Zakir Hussain; actor Naseeruddin Shah; dancers Alamel Valli (left) and Madhavi Mudgal; a Manganiyar musician; a member of the Kerala Kalamandalam Kathakali Troupe; chef Hemant Oberoi and actress Shabana Azmi.

tival by composer and tabla player Zakir Hussain. He performed on the tabla with the orchestra under conductor Christoph Eschenbach in music that combined ragas, Sufi *kalam* and Christian church music.

Vatsala Mehra, known as "the ghazal queen," performed, as did "the raga pianist," Utsav Lal.

The Kennedy Center's smaller Terrace Theater hosted contemporary rock, jazz and other music that blended different genres. Among the performers: guitar, violin, bass and vocals by Emergence from Tamil Nadu; tabla player Suphala; jazz from Indo-Pak Coalition; drummer and composer Sunny Jain; and music producers DJ Rekha and Panjabi MC.

A musical and theatrical highlight was

"The Manganiyar Seduction" by a Sufi sect from Rajasthan, under director Roysten Abel. The 43 musicians were seated in 36 stacked red cubicles that became illuminated individually and collectively as the music unfolded in an unusual multimedia experience.

"The lyrics are all Sufi couplets, and it's all going out to the universe or God," Abel said in an interview on National Public Radio. "The performance is something of a hybrid—not exactly a concert, not exactly a theater piece, but something designed to illuminate and make the audience feel the music of the Manganiyars."

Film, literature and exhibits

Along with film showings, actors and filmmakers from Bollywood and elsewhere appeared for panel discussions on the Indian film industry and the portrayal of women in film. They included actresses Nandita Das, Shabana Azmi and Sharmila Tagore; film directors Adoor Gopalakrishnan and Ketan Mehta; and film scholar Dilip Basu.

Actor Naseeruddin Shah and his Motley Theatre Group performed three theater pieces based on the short stories of writer Ismat Khanum Chughtai.

Another panel explored the relationship between Mohandas K. Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore through their letters

Cultural Exchanges

The festival's curator, Alicia Adams, explains that the Kennedy Center works to bring the best arts and culture from anywhere in the world for the audience to enjoy, both in Washington, D.C. and around the United States. "Programs like maximum INDIA provide an opportunity for cultural exchange, and the Kennedy Center becomes something of a de facto ministry of culture here in D.C., working with governments from around the world," says Adams. "Bringing in artists from India and elsewhere exposes us to the broad diversity that exists in these cultural realms, so eventually we can include them in our regular programming like our dance series, or chamber music series, to get them up on our main stages."

Adams enjoyed researching for the festival, including six trips to India to immerse herself in the culture for a better understanding of the diversity, complexity and origins of Indian arts. While selecting the performers and planning the program wasn't easy, Adams admits with a smile, "The biggest challenge was organizing those visas for our 500 artists and performers coming here from India."

—Jane Varner Malhotra

and articles. The tension between literature and politics brought together three very different writers: commentator and novelist Nayantara Sahgal, novelist Salman Rushdie and British-born journalist and writer William Dalrymple.

Exhibitions of contemporary art ran throughout the Kennedy Center's halls and galleries, featuring displays of the color and variety of the Indian sari, the *pankha* or hand fan, and magnificent gems and jewelry from Jaipur's Gem Palace.

Announcing the maximum INDIA festival in New Delhi, in November 2010, U.S. Ambassador Timothy J. Roemer said, "These people-to-people ties are what bind our two countries together."



Howard Cincotta is a special correspondent with America.gov.

For more information:

maximum INDIA

<http://www.kennedy-center.org/programs/festivals/10-11/india/>

Cinema Under

By DAVID RASKIN

There are two enduring, bipolar images of the drive-in movie theater in American memory. In the first, centered squarely in the suburbs of the 1950s, audiences would make a whole evening of a drive-in outing, showing up early so the kids could play on the jungle gym at the base of the screen while adults engaged in neighborly socializing. As stars grew visible, families would nosh concession stand hot dogs and hamburgers, then settle in for a double feature. The drive-in provided the perfect arena for celebrating the postwar amalgam of the traditional American pioneer spirit—the ethos of manifest destiny and wide-open spaces—with a more newfangled faith in progress and technology.

In the second enduring image, rooted in the '70s and '80s, the drive-in lay beyond the fringe of polite society, a seedy lot exhibiting pornography or cheap, bloody exploitation and “slasher” fare. Concessions were equally cheap and dirty, and these remaining theaters survived anemically, at best. Many diversified their interests by renting out space for weekend swap meets or running other ventures like gun shops and video clubs. But by night, lots were desolate, if not deserted, and some municipalities even brought injunctions against theaters whose R- and X-rated projections were visible from beyond their property.

At the end of the drive-in's prime, around 1960, there were more than 4,000 outdoor screens [in America]. Through the '70s, they held steady at about 3,600. That number halved by 1988, and halved again over the next 10 years. The exodus slowed in the '90s, and the numbers...reached a kind of equilibrium. There [were] about 650 drive-in screens [in 2008]—which is about 650 more than many people would guess—and while a few are shuttered each year, an equal number are opened. In the right circumstances, the drive-in is once again a viable business.

William Beck was on the leading edge. In 1936, he began screening movies at

Uncle Charlie's restaurant in Berlinsville, Pennsylvania, a small town near industrial Allentown. Three years later, he began screening outdoors on rented land, and in 1946 he bought a parcel of land and started Becky's Drive-In.

Beck, like so many other drive-in entrepreneurs, benefited from a perfect storm of conditions possible only in postwar America. Prosperity and the baby boom combined to draw families to the suburbs nearly as quickly as tracts could be subdivided, houses erected and driveways for each family's new car paved. Zoning laws that had designated land for single-family housing also designated commercial space at intersections, and industrial space on cheap land near highways, railroads and rivers. Drive-ins provided communal entertainment for these sprouting commuter towns, and a nearly foolproof business model for the aspiring drive-in entrepreneur.

The programming was of little consequence. Operators could book movies with low rental fees, five months old or five years old, past hits or cheap B pictures. John Wayne, Bob Hope and Disney films could play on the same screen as straight-to-the-drive-in sci-fi features like “The She-Creature” and “Attack of the Giant Leeches.” During this peak in the Eisenhower-Kennedy era, Becky's showed second-run and B pictures and never lacked business, says Beck's daughter, Cindy Deppe.

And yet, by the early '70s, Beck had resorted to screening X-rated films. The Allentown area, once home to 14 outdoor theaters, was on a steep slide. [Within 30 years, it was down to three.]

The drive-in's swift descent, like its phenomenal success, was facilitated by values embracing technology and expansion. After television became widespread in the '60s, second-run and B movies found a market in pay television and home video. Malls and shopping centers—with their multiplex cinemas boasting superior technical quality—established a new retail

While American drive-in cinema may not regain its former glorious peak of the 1950s, new owners are trying to ensure its survival through another generation.

DAVID SAMMON © AP/WIDEWORLD/Photo



TRAVIS MORRIS © AP/WIDEWORLD/Photo



the Stars



Above: "Shrek" is seen on the outdoor movie screen as viewers sit in their cars at the Lake Park Drive-In theater in Williston, North Dakota.

Left: The marquee of The Parma Motor Vu drive-in theater in Idaho.

Below left: A ticket collection booth at the South Drive-In Theater in Dodge City, Kansas.

infrastructure and necessitated new development patterns.

In a sense, drive-ins were created by urban sprawl, then crushed by it. For owners, this was often more reward than punishment. As effective land speculators, they owned lots worth substantially more than the movies could rake in. The merits of selling became incontestable for most of them.

Since sprawl shows little sign of ceasing,

the resurgence of the drive-in would seem unlikely. But given the right location—such as a modest, stable city like Allentown or a college town, or a small Southern city where movies can play year round—a drive-in can find a steady audience.

Theaters that survived the drive-in crash needed an image makeover, and many made the transition to first-run films in the early '90s. Paradoxically, the growth of the multiplex helped them do this. As the number of indoor screens multiplied exponentially, so too did the number of first-run prints, some of which would move to drive-ins after just a couple of weeks. Soon, studios began making dedicated prints for drive-ins.

Drive-ins were thus primed to bring back their original image: an inexpensive, family-friendly venue. Today, Becky's serves

For more information:

Drive-in Theater

<http://www.driveintheater.com/>

Becky's Drive-in

<http://www.beckysdi.com/main/>

some local regulars with popular PG hits—superhero action flicks, [a] Will Ferrell comedy—but Deppe says it mostly draws crowds of tourists. Couples and families travel once or twice each summer from Philadelphia and New York to make a night of the drive-in, while some nostalgic boomers show up with their grandkids.

Relying on nostalgia is not the only marketing strategy, though, as 34-year-old Ryan Smith, a law student turned drive-in entrepreneur, admonishes. "Do you go to a baseball game because it's nostalgic and because it's America's pastime? No. You



*Above: Aerial view of the Olympic drive-in theater in Los Angeles, California in 1948.
Below: Families watch a movie, from inside and outside their cars, at Shankweiler's drive-in in a pastoral field north of Allentown, Pennsylvania in 1993.*

go because you love the team or it's exciting or it's something to do with friends." His Stars and Stripes Drive-In, a...three-screen that opened in 2003 outside Lubbock, Texas, is exemplary of a state showing strong drive-in growth. His theater—which screens double features to a total capacity of 1,000 cars—could never survive simply as a tourist niche. "I hope we're in the very beginning of an upswing," Smith adds, "because I certainly don't want to be in a dying industry."

While conditions may never again converge to bring drive-ins back to their glory days, owners like Smith are lending the business some new cachet and ensuring its survival through another generation. "I like the indoor theaters, but it took one time going to the Sky-Vue and I was hooked," Smith says of his grandfather's theater, which dates to 1948. "I thought to myself, 'This is the way to watch a movie.' I was watching *Signs* on a summer night. With the clear sky, I could see all the stars. It was like I was waiting on the aliens to invade. I thought, 'Man, this is too cool.'"



David Raskin has worked as a reporter.





Rickshaws, American-Style

By STEVE FOX

The U.S. approach to foot-powered transport combines advertising, jokes and tips instead of fares.

Picture this. A young man with what appears to be a small carton of McDonald's French fries dangling in front of his face pedals along, talking and joking with the couple riding behind him in a pedicab plastered with ads for the company's fast food. This is a rickshaw, American-style, a modern-day version of an ancient mode of transportation that combines advertising, comedy routines, sightseeing tours and plain old "take-me-to-my-hotel" requests in an industry that has spread to dozens of cities

across the United States.

"We offer 'transportainment,'" says Dana Bein, a driver who also manages the Boston office of National Pedicabs, which has about 75 drivers in the peak summer season. "My customers have a lot of fun and I get a lot of repeat business."

National Pedicabs' owner Ben Morris launched the business in 2005 with five pedicabs in Boston, Massachusetts. His company now has about 125 pedicabs in Washington, D.C., San Francisco, California, New York City and Fort Lauderdale, Florida. National Pedicab drivers include college students, individuals who are unemployed or between jobs, teachers, firefighters, even attorneys and accountants—basically people who

want to earn some extra money while exercising and interacting with customers.

"What other kind of job is there where you get exercise, you're outside, you meet all kinds of interesting people and you also make some money?" asks Morris. "It's fun, although you have to be a particular kind of person to be good at it, because it's basically a sales job."

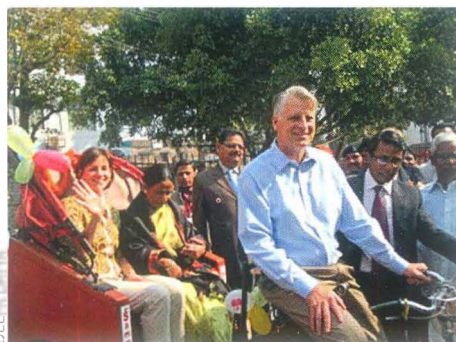
Drivers at pedicab companies around America generally lease their vehicles for daily fees that vary with the season and increase when there is a big event where demand will be high. There are usually no set fares, with drivers operating on a tip-only basis, an approach that enables companies and drivers to avoid city regulations governing taxicabs—but also makes for some interesting situations.

"A lot of times people try to barter—some drivers have been offered food," Bein says.

"One time I was waiting on a corner

Above: A newlywed couple is all smiles as they ride off in a pedicab after their wedding in Eugene, Oregon.

Left: Ambassador Timothy J. Roemer steers a cycle rickshaw with his wife, Sally (left), and Maimun Nisa as passengers at the SammaanN Foundation in Patna, Bihar, in February 2010.







Pedicabs in Boston, Massachusetts serve as advertising vehicles for McDonald's with drivers wearing helmets that dangle French fries.



MARY ALTAFFER © AP/WIDEWORLD

Above: A pedicab driver makes his way down Broadway looking for customers in New York City's Times Square.



Courtesy Eugene Pedicabs

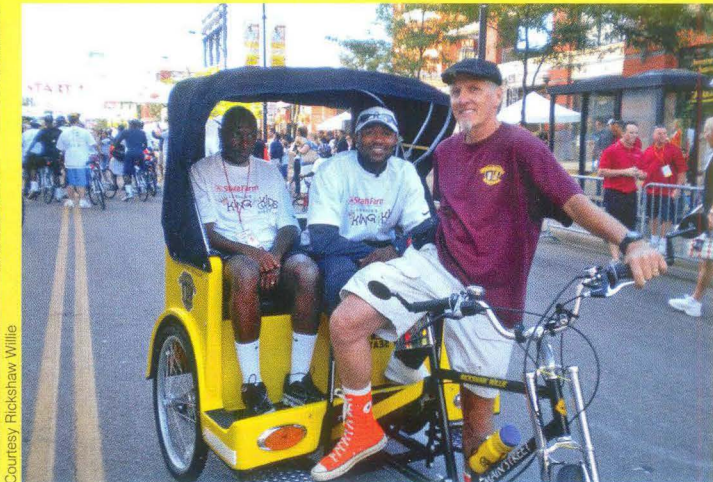
Below: Pedicabs advertising a hair product are parked outside a salon in Boston, Massachusetts.

Above: The University of Oregon mascot and a young customer are ready for a ride on this pedicab driven by Wayne Whiting, owner of Eugene Pedicabs.

Below: Tim Wilhelm, who does business as Rickshaw Willie, makes sure passengers are having a good time in Akron, Ohio.



BIZJAVIERHU © SEAFAR for Aveeno



Courtesy Rickshaw Willie

CRAIG RUTTLE © AP/WIDEWORLD

and a guy ran up to me and handed me \$5 and told me to watch his car and if the meter maid [parking enforcement] came along and I held her off, there was more in it for me. Right after he left, she did come along and so I started talking to her and told her I was interested in becoming a meter maid. While I was distracting her, the guy comes running back, gives me another \$5, gets in his car and takes off before she could give him a ticket."

Drivers who work during busy times such as Boston Red Sox baseball games,

can make \$200 in a shift. Bein says, although working only for tips means that on occasion a passenger refuses to pay anything.

"Sometimes you get stiffed—it happens and there's nothing you can do except make a joke out of it," says Bein. "I had a couple of teenage girls who stiffed me, got out of the cab and went into a Gucci store. So I turned to the people on the sidewalk and said, 'Can we give these girls a round of applause? They stiff me and then go to Gucci.' You can't

let one incident get you down. You've got to be a kind of free spirit. You can't be someone who is easily embarrassed and you have to be somewhat of an extrovert. The guys and girls who make most money are those who are most willing to strike up conversations with people."

Wayne Whiting, who operates Eugene Pedicabs in the college town of Eugene, Oregon, notes that working for tips can make for some small—and large—paydays.

"I had one guy who got a ride from downtown to the university and on the



Below: A pedicab driver in New York's snow-covered Central Park after a blizzard in December 2010.



For more information:

National Pedicabs

www.nationalpedicabs.com

Eugene Pedicabs

www.eugenepedicabs.com

Revolution Rickshaws

www.revolutionrickshaws.com

Rickshaw Willie

www.rickshawwillie.com

Main Street Pedicabs

www.pedicab.com

way he bought a hot dog and gave the vendor a dollar tip," Whiting recalls. "Then, when we got to his destination, he said he only had a dollar. On the other hand, I've had a couple of my drivers get tipped \$100. You never know. There aren't very many women who do this, but the ones I know who have done this make incredible money. What you need working for tips is an outgoing personality. You can't be afraid to talk to people."

While the drivers generate their income from tips, many pedicab companies derive much of their income from advertising, with panels promoting products and companies attached to the sides and backs of the pedicabs.

"For us, it's essentially an ad business," says Morris of National Pedicabs. "Once you get outside the home, billboard advertising is the dominant medium. But now some of the major brands are starting to look for nontraditional media and pedicabs are starting to gain more acceptance. Our advertisers include Comcast, Yahoo!, Anheuser-Busch, McDonald's, Bacardi, Safeway, Timberland—major companies. It's very reasonably priced—you can buy [advertising on] 20 pedicabs in Boston for less than the price of a billboard on the highway."

On the crowded streets of New York City, pedicabs are an environmentally friendly way of moving both passengers and freight, explains Gregg Zukowski, owner of Revolution Rickshaws and past president of the New York City Pedicab Owners Association.

"It's important to recognize that pedicabs are a holistic and sustainable transportation solution," Zukowski says. "When you use a motor vehicle, you're polluting and you're using imported oil. Pedicabs are a good solution to moving around in the city. The average speed of all motorized vehicles in midtown Manhattan is about four miles per hour. Pedicabs can do better than that, especially at rush hour."

Zukowski, who has been doing it for eight years, notes that driving a pedicab in New York City isn't for everyone.

"It's a very intense environment—high risk, high reward," he says. "It's very challenging with all the cars, trucks, law enforcement, rush-hour traffic. If you can keep your wits about you and find people

who are looking to move around, you can do all right. I'm very confident about the service I'm selling. I get a good workout and I can drive about 20 hours a week and can pay my way."

Getting away from motorized transportation is an emphasis of Tim Wilhelm, who does business as Rickshaw Willie in Akron, Ohio.

"I'd like to see more people on bikes," Wilhelm says. "I like to ride bicycles and I've found a way to make money at it. My main occupation is as a truck driver, but I ride on the weekend. I have fun, make a little cash on the side and it keeps me in shape too. I also do breast cancer [fundraising] walks—I'll ride along and if there are women who get tired and can't finish, I'll pick them up and help them out."

Many pedicab companies and individual drivers buy their vehicles from Steve Meyer's Main Street Pedicabs in Denver, Colorado.

"I first saw rickshaws when I was traveling in India in the 1970s, but it's a different situation there," Meyer says. "In India, people of all classes take pedicabs but the status of the driver is in question. We don't have the same class structure here. In our society, the value system is that a young person just starting out in life does whatever kind of work they can do. Also, pedicabs appeal to Americans because of the independence—drivers can work when they want. If they want to go skiing one day and work the next, it's their choice."

Main Street Pedicabs sells several different types of pedicabs, including passenger, billboard and freight models, with the price of a passenger model starting at about \$2,900 and going up from there, depending on what additional equipment is chosen.

"We started out selling locally and now we sell all over the world," says Meyer, whose company is nearly 20 years old. "However, pedicabs are still a small industry in America—there are more pedicabs in most cities in India than in all of the U.S. But if it hadn't been for the advertising revenue, the industry wouldn't have taken off at all. Pedicabs are an expensive bicycle, but an inexpensive billboard."



Steve Fox is a freelance writer, former newspaper publisher and reporter based in Ventura, California.

Electric Cars Coming

By KARIN RIVES

Traffic on American roads could run a bit cleaner.

In his State of the Union address in January, President Barack Obama challenged the United States to become the first nation with 1 million electric cars.

Cleaner vehicles are part of the Obama administration's plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build "clean" industries that provide new jobs.

Some experts have questioned whether the goal President Obama set is realistic, considering that the market for electric cars is still in its infancy.

A new report from Indiana University says automakers' production targets won't be sufficient to generate 1 million electric cars by 2015—mainly because consumer demand isn't there yet.

"We believe that [plug-in electric vehicles] are an idea whose time has come," says Gurminder Bedi, chairman of the Indiana University panel that authored the report and a former Ford Motor Company executive. "But it's clear that the technology needs a redoubled investment in time, energy and money from both government and the auto industry before [these cars] become part of our automotive mainstream."

Brad Berman, founder and editor of PluginCars.com, is more optimistic, noting that the first two electric cars aimed at the mass market—the Chevy Volt and Nissan LEAF—have received some good reviews.

"Most forecasts peg sales...to ramp up

from tens of thousands per year in the first year or two to hundreds of thousands by 2013," he says. "While it's hard to predict exact numbers, these two models alone will get us well past the halfway mark toward the 1 million goal."

A number of additional models could hit the market over the next two years, adding to the overall volume, Berman says.

Because all-electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles remain more expensive than equivalent gasoline vehicles, many American consumers still can't afford them.

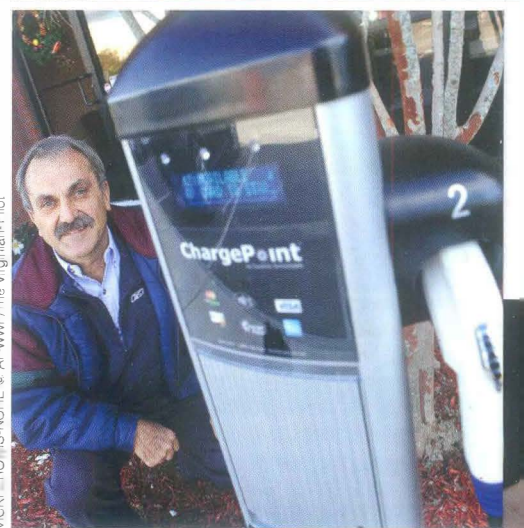
So, one of the President's proposals is a \$7,500 rebate, or immediate price reduction, for electric cars. Today, consumers can claim a \$7,500 tax deduction, with the savings not available for months.

Under the rebate plan, a 2011 model of the Chevy Volt would cost \$32,780. A 2011 Nissan LEAF would be just more than \$25,000.

In addition, the President seeks funds to be awarded to communities that encourage the conversion to electric vehicles—for example, by building special road lanes and parking spaces for such cars, or by training people to work in the advanced vehicle technology industry.

The expensive and relatively short-lived batteries for electric cars remain the big stumbling block to development of a mass market.

The Obama administration therefore is seeking a boost in government funding for electric-car research and development by 30 percent. A new Energy Innovation Hub, meanwhile, would focus on improving battery life and capacity.



PABLO MARTINEZ MONTEVAIS © AP/WIDEWORLD

VICKI IROUS/NO-HE & AP/WIDEWORLD/The Virginian-Pilot

"We're going to have batteries that go 300 miles [483 kilometers] on a charge, with 10 [dollars] of electricity instead of 50 [dollars of gasoline]," Vice President Joe Biden said during a recent visit to a battery company in Indiana.

Our Way?

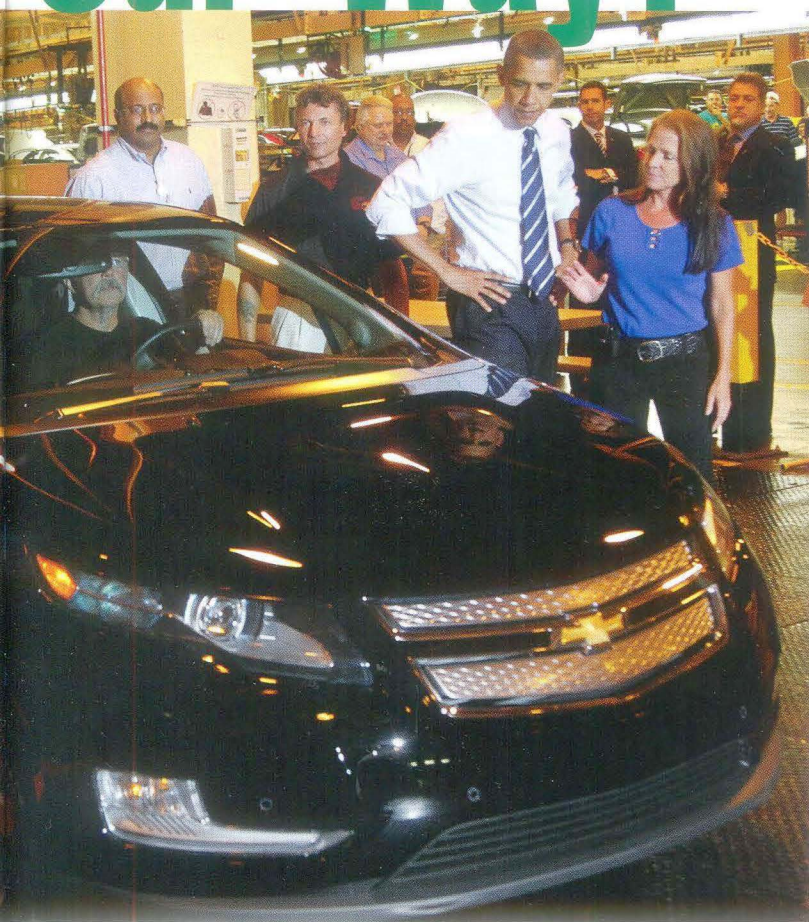
For more information:

Electric Cars of America

<http://www.electriccarsofamerica.com/>

Electric Cars: A Definitive Guide

<http://www.hybridcars.com/electric-car/>

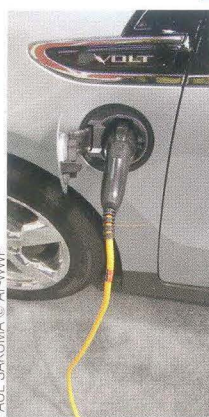


Above: President Barack Obama looks over a Chevy Volt, with assembly manager Teri Quigley (right), at the General Motors auto plant in Hamtramck, Michigan.

Left: Richard Good, president of Solar Services, opened the first

electric car charging station in Virginia Beach, Virginia. His station will give an electric car battery a full charge in roughly 90 minutes.

Below: Miles per gallon are displayed in the Chevy Volt electric car in Redwood City, California.



Top center: A Chevy Volt electric vehicle is charged at Plug-In 2010, a conference and exposition about plug-in hybrid and electric vehicles, in San Jose, California.

Top right: Felix Kramer, founder of CalCars, with his

new Chevy Volt in Redwood City, California.

Above: A Nissan LEAF charges at a dedicated solar-assisted electric vehicle charging station in Knoxville, Tennessee.



The company Biden visited, Ener1 Inc., received a \$118.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy in 2009 to expand its production of lithium-ion batteries. The investment will allow Ener1 to ramp up production to 60,000 electric-car

batteries annually and to triple employment to 1,400 by 2013, depending on demand, a company spokesman said.

Ultimately, gasoline prices may determine the market for these new cars, Berman says.

"If the price at the pumps makes a run to \$4 or even \$5, consumers are likely to flock to electric cars—which can be fueled for the equivalent of around \$1 a gallon," he says.

Carmakers seem to be growing increasingly optimistic. In January, General Motors

announced that it would speed up production of the Chevy Volt in response to growing customer interest.

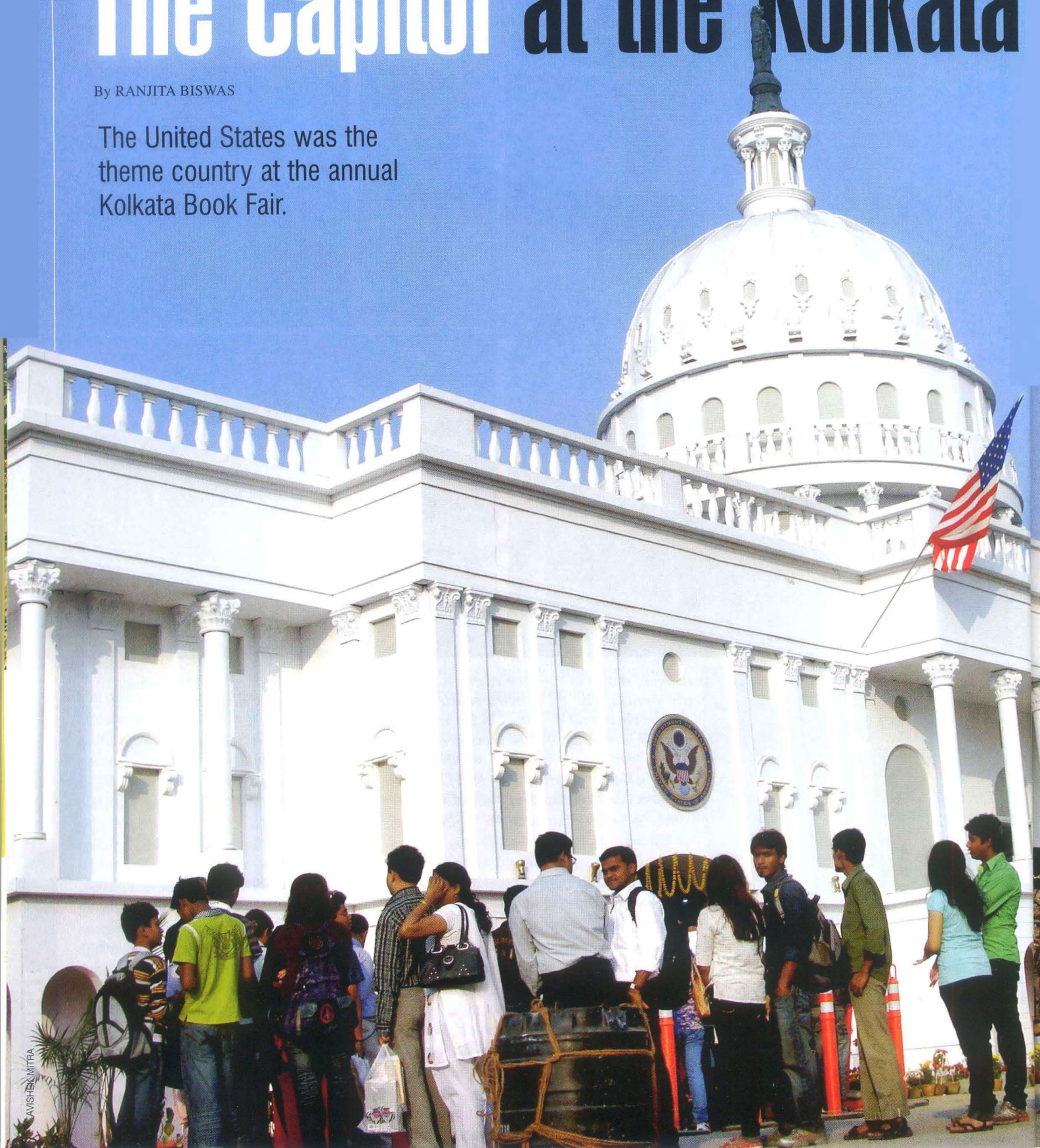
"We're accelerating our launch plan to have Volts in all participating Chevrolet dealerships in every single state...by the end of this year," says Rick Scheidt, a General Motors marketing executive. "This is the right thing to do for our customers and our dealers who are seeing increased traffic onto their showroom floors."

Karen Rives is a staff writer with America.gov.

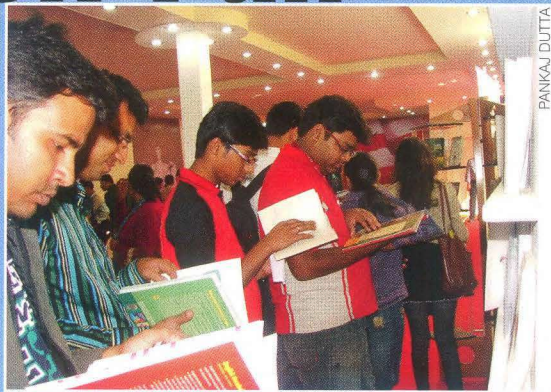
The Capitol at the Kolkata

By RANJITA BISWAS

The United States was the theme country at the annual Kolkata Book Fair.



Book Fair



Above: People browse through the books on display at the U.S. pavilion.

Below: Visitors queue up at the entrance of the American pavilion, designed as the U.S. Capitol.



For more information:

Kolkata Book Fair

<http://www.kolkatabookfaironline.com>

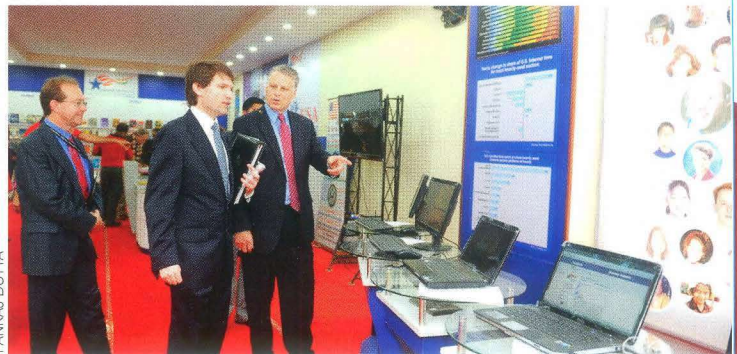
The annual Kolkata Book Fair enjoys a major spot in the city's cultural map. This year, its 35th, the United States was chosen as the focal theme. Ambassador Timothy J. Roemer, who was present at the inauguration, said, "This city's passion for life and the intellectual curiosity of its people makes Kolkata a natural host for one of the world's largest events for devotees of the printed word.... As a book lover and book collector myself, I am personally honored to be here on the opening day and excited to see what the fair has to offer."

The choice of the theme country also meant that book lovers had an opportunity to interact with men and women of letters from America through book readings, discussions and workshops.

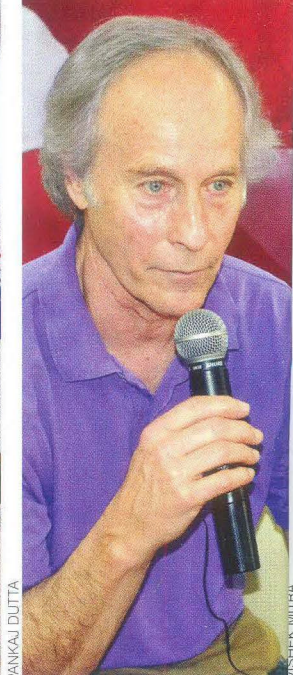
Richard Ford, Pulitzer Prize winner for fiction in 1996, was the chief guest at the inaugural function and sounded the symbolic gong to open the fair. He said he was "dazzled" by the fair, which is "fixed in the heart of Kolkata." Ford also gave a lecture on "Extra Literary Influences" on his writing though, usually, he admitted, "I don't talk about my work. I prefer to hoard thoughts for my future work, to turn into stories."

Ford's introspective musings gave a glimpse into the creative churning of a writer in the making. "I grew up in Jackson, Mississippi. I can't remember my father reading anything except account books." Even though Ford had lots of questions for the elders, he never got answers and was brushed off with "You don't need to know" or "I don't know." That's how he found his world in books and let his imagination run riot. "Invention became my way of finding things," he said. That inventive mind and imagination helps him easily locate his stories in different locales.

It was Ford's first visit to India. However, reading Indian authors like R.K. Narayan and Rabindranath Tagore had been a part of his growing up years.



Above: Michael Pelletier, minister counselor for public affairs, U.S. Embassy (from left); Scott Hartmann, Kolkata American Center deputy director; and Ambassador Timothy J. Roemer at the pavilion.



Annie Griffiths World Through the Lens

Though Annie Griffiths has travelled more than half the world as a senior photographer with National Geographic, it was her first visit to India. At the fair, she held a workshop for photographers and also talked about the importance of light, "geometry in framing" and the "special moment" in photography. In a slide show, she showed how a photo can tell a story by using imagination.

Griffiths was one of the first women to be recruited by National Geographic. She, however, looks at photographs beyond just beautiful images. As a socially committed artist, she has used her skill to bring together like-minded women to form Ripple Effect Images (www.ripple-effectimages.org), a nonprofit organization which documents the effects of climate change on communities around the world, particularly women.

The organization is now working on some projects in India. Griffiths also visited a women's empowerment project in the Sundarbans. "It's amazing what women can do. India is one of the most innovative countries in the world," she said.

Griffiths published "A Camera, Two Kids and a Camel," a photo memoir of her work, in 2008. Her latest book is "Simply Beautiful Photographs," a compilation of stunning images selected from the National Geographic archive.

—R.B.



Annie Griffiths during her presentation at the book fair.

In his talk, he often mentioned Tagore, whose 150th birth anniversary is being celebrated this year. Some other writers of Indian origin he likes to read are Salman Rushdie, Anita Desai, Amitav Ghosh and Rohinton Mistry.

To a question whether young Americans are reading less, Ford countered: "In fact, Americans are reading much, much more today. Kids are reading on [the] Internet—it's an inexpensive way of reading. As long as the reading habit remains, it's okay."

Indian American writer Akhil Sharma instantly established a rapport with the audience while talking about "The Immigrant Novel." Sharma, however, had reservations. "A novel is about human nature and human beings which is universal; it's not as if the immigrant novel is different."

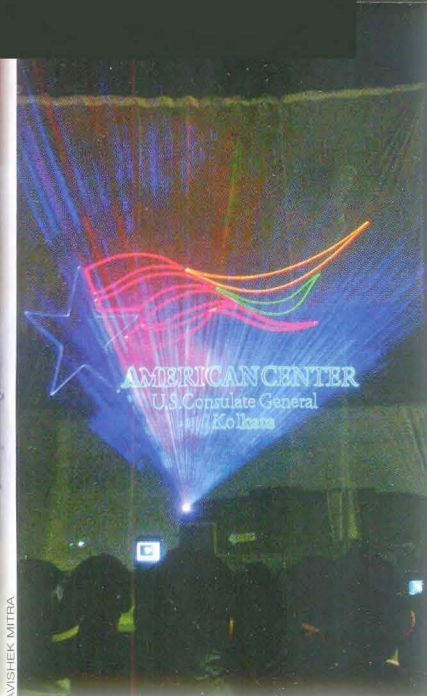
His talk on his parents' migration when he was just 8, the discovery of a new life in America, and the dawning of a desire to become an author after reading Ernest Hemingway "and everything about him" made for rapt listening. "Hemingway taught me the technique of how to write about my community, India, Indian dishes like *chole bhature* or *khichdi* in English without losing the flavor and essence. He switched from one language to another and from locale to locale beautifully," Sharma said. But, he clarified, "I am not an immigrant writer. I am just a writer."

This year, 522 stalls were put up, including a special corner for independent, small publications. Fourteen countries participated in the fair, which began in the last week of January.

The American pavilion, designed after the Capitol building in Washington, D.C., and spread over 270 square meters, drew huge crowds. One of the gates to the fairground was built as a replica of the U.S. Library of Congress.

Beth A. Payne, U.S. consul general in Kolkata, said, "Our association with the Kolkata Book Fair symbolizes the growing ties between our countries, exemplifies our shared values of the importance of education and knowledge, and represents the strong people-to-people ties that are the foundation to our partnership."

According to records, 210,000 people visited the American pavilion. Tridib Chatterjee, honorary secretary general of the



Far left: Visitors at the U.S. pavilion.

Left center: American author Richard Ford was the chief guest at the inaugural event.

Left: Laser show at the book fair.

Below: HaviKoro introduces local enthusiasts to B-boying, an acrobatic, hip hop dance style, at the City Centre mall in Kolkata.

Publishers & Booksellers Guild, which organized the fair, shared an anecdote about an elderly woman who visited the pavilion and stood in the queue for quite a while. She did not mind the wait. "See, I don't foresee ever visiting America in my lifetime. Now, I can at least get an idea about [what] this famous building in Washington looks like," she said.

Young people had other reasons, which were mainly to inquire about study and library facilities at the American Center. Books on American literature, fiction, computers, management and DVDs drew attention of the visitors. New mem-

berships to the library stood at more than 1,400. Visitors tried out the e-resources, which are a relatively new addition to the library. A novel idea for many was an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the future of book reading and publishing using iPods that were on display. There were also queries about the upcoming children's section in the library.

"We hope that the new library memberships at the book fair will enable them to learn more about American life and culture through the books, periodicals and films available at the American Library," Payne said.

Another draw at the ground was a laser show, presented by the Kolkata American Center. The show was a first in the fair's history. Every evening, at half hour intervals, the sky was lit up by the 15-minute show with symbols of the United States, from the bald eagle and Abraham Lincoln to the American flag and modern city life. The brilliant play of color and foot-tapping music kept the crowd transfixed. The show was choreographed to the music of Ray Charles' "America the Beautiful," Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the U.S.A." and Bob Sinclair's "World Hold On."

Books, writers and entertainment from across the Atlantic blended well with the essence of the Kolkata Book Fair, a meeting ground for those who look beyond the humdrum life for food for thought.



Ranjita Biswas is a Kolkata-based journalist who writes on travel, film and gender issues. She also translates fiction and writes short stories.

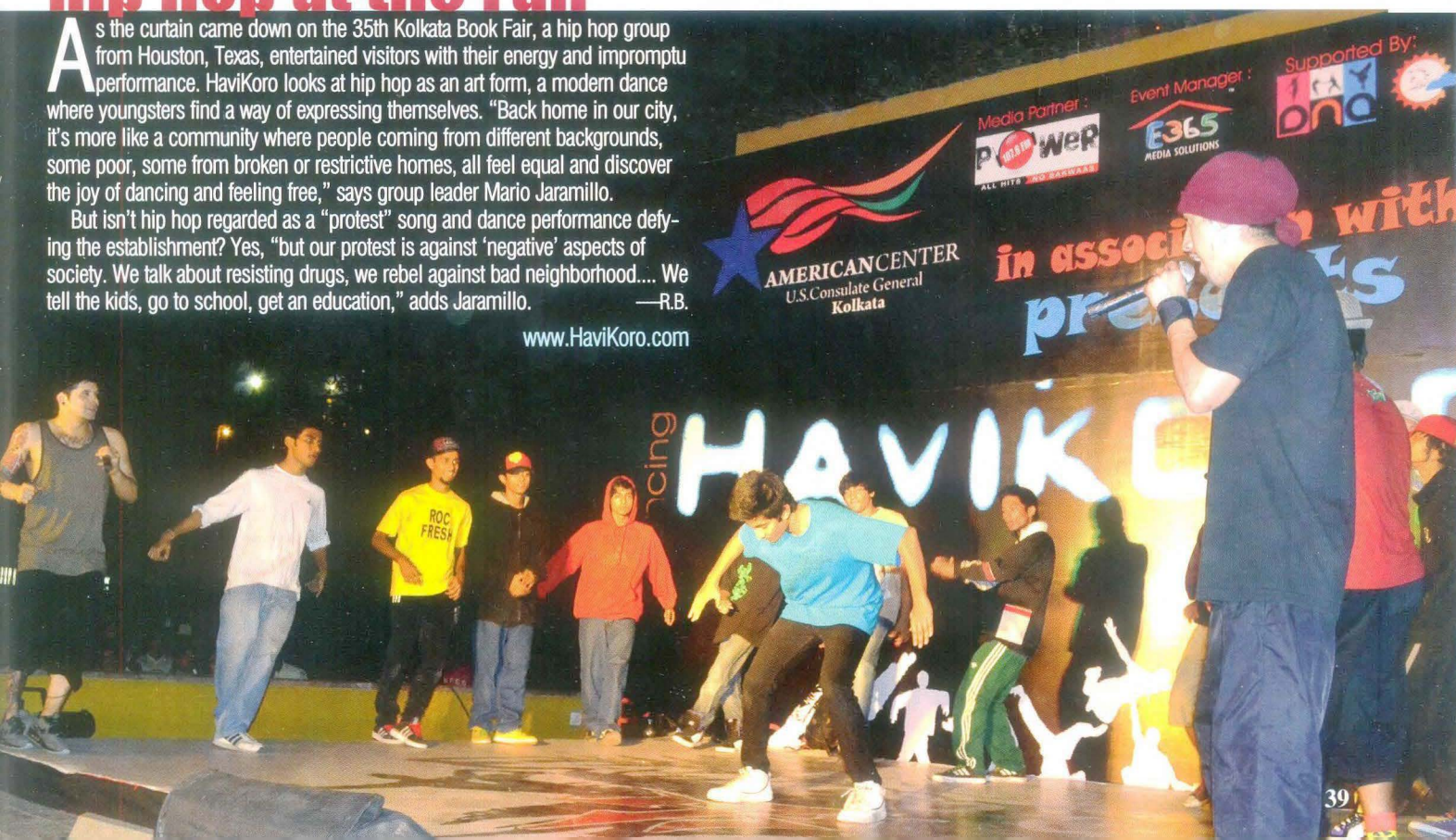
Hip Hop at the Fair

As the curtain came down on the 35th Kolkata Book Fair, a hip hop group from Houston, Texas, entertained visitors with their energy and impromptu performance. HaviKoro looks at hip hop as an art form, a modern dance where youngsters find a way of expressing themselves. "Back home in our city, it's more like a community where people coming from different backgrounds, some poor, some from broken or restrictive homes, all feel equal and discover the joy of dancing and feeling free," says group leader Mario Jaramillo.

But isn't hip hop regarded as a "protest" song and dance performance defying the establishment? Yes, "but our protest is against 'negative' aspects of society. We talk about resisting drugs, we rebel against bad neighborhood.... We tell the kids, go to school, get an education," adds Jaramillo.

—R.B.

www.HaviKoro.com



Angel Island,
San Francisco Bay

Angel Island

By SANDIP ROY

*One hundred days
Tara Singh
Sur Singh Village
Lahore District*

These words, etched in Gurmukhi script, on a column in the men's barracks of a defunct immigration station, are all that remain of Tara Singh's frustration. Singh was one of hundreds of Indian immigrants, many of them Punjabi farmers, who tried to immigrate to the United States in the early 20th century. Many never got further than Angel Island, the immigration station in San Francisco Bay.

Indian immigrants in the United States now have one of the highest median incomes of any minority group. Almost 40 percent have master degrees or higher. They are stereotyped as the model minority—doctors and engineers.

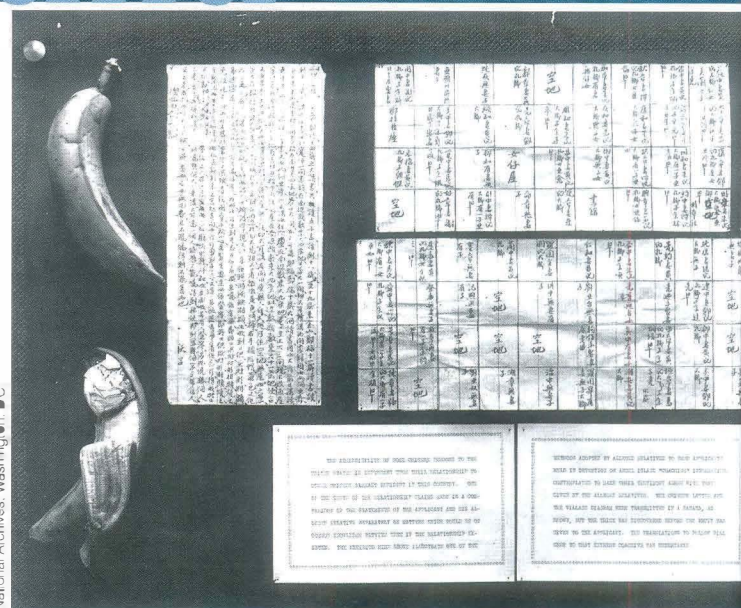
But a century ago, it was a different story. Poor Punjabi farmers, displaced

by imperial Britain's agricultural policy, were heading to America. "Uncle Sam's Domain" was becoming the "Sikh's Mecca," complained the San Francisco Call. The Asiatic Exclusion League launched a recall campaign against Hart Hyatt North, the commissioner general of immigration, for not being aggressive enough in halting the "Hindu invasion." The League nicknamed Hyatt North, "Sahib North."

"South Asians had the highest exclusion rates. At least 66 percent," says Judy Yung, co-author of "Angel Island—Immigrant Gateway to America."

Angel Island opened in 1910, the west coast counterpart to Ellis Island, the Atlantic gateway to generations of immigrants. "Ellis Island was built to restrict but not ever exclude European immigrants," explains Yung. "Angel Island was built to exclude Asian immigrants."

Yung's father was one of the thousands of Chinese immigrants caught



in the web of Asian exclusion laws. In China, the Yungs were really Toms. Her father bought the papers of Yung, a merchant. He was 16 and paid \$1,600 for the papers and coaching notes. It took him 10 years to pay off his debt.

"We always felt we didn't really belong and could be deported at any moment," remembers Yung.

The Chinese were not without resources. There was a bustling Chinese community in the United States. The Chinese kitchen staff on Angel Island sneaked cheat sheets to detained immigrants with their food, sometimes inside banana peels and peanut shells.

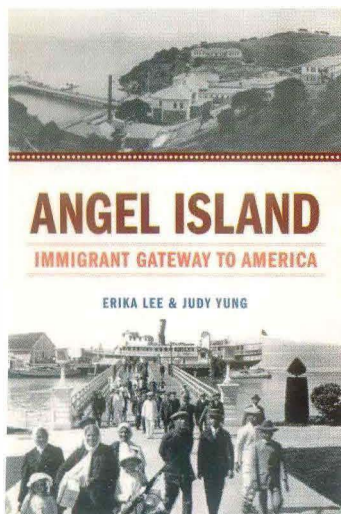
The Indians were caught in a Catch-22 situation. If they said they had work

Coaching notes inside a banana with detailed village map.

lined up they were suspected of being contract labor. If they didn't have jobs, they were deemed likely to become a public charge.

"You could manipulate the law to screen out groups of people," says Yung. "They would say, 'Who is going to hire an Indian?' so your being undesirable means you are likely to become a public charge."

If they were not likely to become a public charge, they were stopped for health reasons—poor physique, hookworm or trachoma. From 1910 to 1920, 61 percent of Indian applicants were barred on the grounds that they



Judy Yung (left), co-author of "Angel Island" (far left).

were likely to become a public charge, 28 percent banned for medical reasons.

Some Indians made it through. Eighteen-year-old twin sisters Leelabati and Seeta Guhathakurta came as students in 1934. They were landed without even having to go to Angel Island. Vaishno Bagai and his family came in 1915 with \$25,000 in cash. Women immigrants were rare and newspapers were fascinated with his wife's diamond nose stud. Bupendra Nath Ray brought a letter from the American consul general in Calcutta vouching for him.

It was mainly an issue of class.

For more information:

Angel Island State Park

<http://www.angelisland.com/>

Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation

<http://www.aiisf.org/>

Many immigrants were active in the Gadar Party (Freedom Party) which organized against British rule. Har Dayal, a Gadar Party leader, taught philosophy at Stanford University in California. When he applied for U.S. citizenship, an alarmed commissioner for immigration and the British Embassy decided he had to be deported. The hearings happened on Angel Island.



Courtesy Liana Gupta Belloni

Kanta Chandra Gupta (second from left) and her five siblings arrived on Angel Island in 1910.

Medical student Robindra Nag was grilled about whether he planned to engage in manual labor. "Certainly not," he retorted. "No one in our family ever worked; has ever engaged in manual labor. My uncle is a district judge." Nag was admitted.

These early Indian immigrants had no homeland government backing them. India was under British rule. "The British government went out of its way to stop them from immigrating," says Yung. "You could be admitted and later hunted down and deported if you could be proven to be politically involved as subversives."

When Indians helped halt the march of the Japanese during World War II, attitudes started shifting. But Indians did not come in significant numbers until the immigration laws changed in 1965. By then, the Angel Island immigration station had shut down. All that was left were the old barracks and the plaintive stories of countless Tara Singhs etched on its walls.

Tara Singh, Lahore
...nine months and
.....jail.

Tara Singh
19 June 1936



Sandip Roy is an editor with New America Media currently in Kolkata.

Facts About Angel Island

Angel Island is the largest island in San Francisco Bay and was home to the Coast Miwok American Indians. Before an immigration station was established there, immigrants were detained on steamships or the San Francisco County Jail. A detention facility on Pier 40 in San Francisco was so crowded, with such poor ventilation and sewage facilities, it led to detainees risking their lives to escape.

In 1904, the U.S. Congress set aside \$250,000 to construct an immigration facility on Angel Island. Immigration officials thought having the facility on an island would segregate Americans from diseases carried by immigrants and make it harder for friends and family to coach the new arrivals.

Angel Island Immigration Station opened on January 21, 1910. The San Francisco Chronicle gushed, "Newcomers from foreign shores will probably think they have struck paradise when they emerge from steerage quarters of an ocean liner and land at the summer resort."

From 1910 to 1940, one million people were processed through the port of San Francisco on their way in and out of the United States. An estimated 300,000 were detained there, one third of whom were Chinese.

Angel Island closed after a fire in 1940 and fell into disrepair. In May 1970, a ranger discovered Chinese calligraphy on the walls. A campaign to stop them from being torn down commenced with the setting up of the Ad-Hoc Committee to Save the Angel Island Detention Center. More than 180 Chinese poems, besides 33 graphic images and 156 inscriptions in Japanese, Punjabi, Korean, Russian, Spanish, etc. have been found. In 1976, California Governor Jerry Brown signed the law to restore Angel Island.

In 1983, Paul Chow founded the Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation.

In 1997, the Angel Island Immigration Station was designated a National Historic Landmark. In 1999, the National Trust for Historic Preservation named it one of "11 Most Endangered Historic Places."

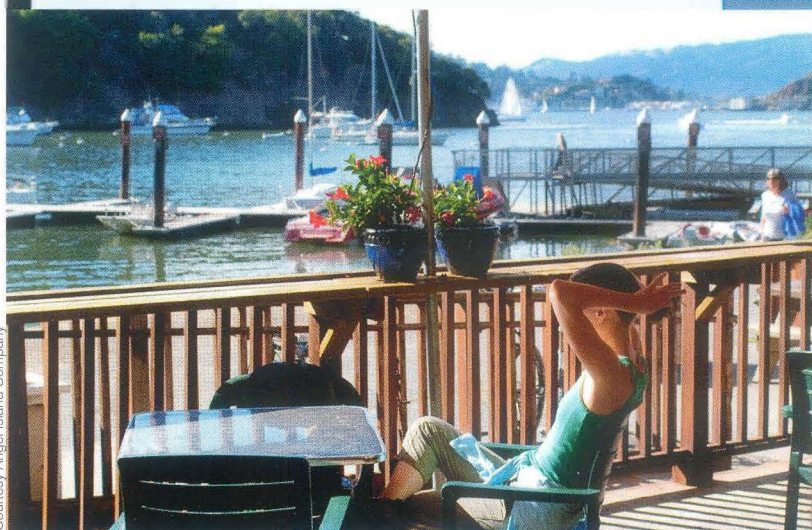
In 2005, the Angel Island Immigration Station Restoration and Preservation Act was passed by the U.S. Congress and signed into law by President George W. Bush.

President Barack Obama proclaimed January 21, 2010 National Angel Island Day. He said, "The children of Angel Island have seized the opportunities their ancestors saw from across the ocean."

—S.R.

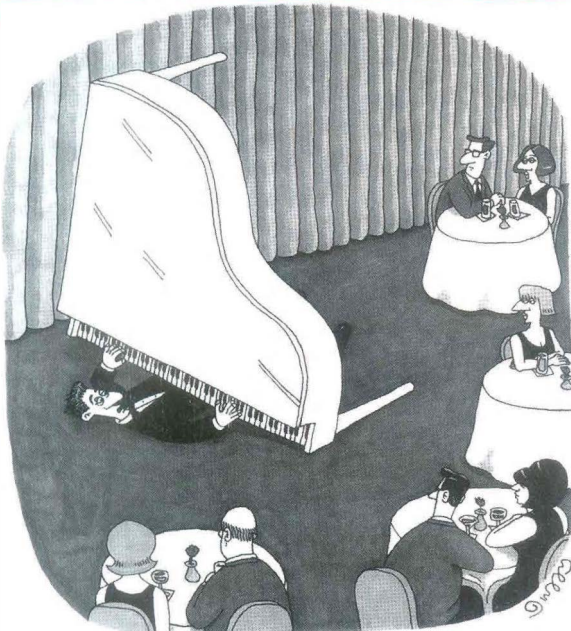
From "Angel Island — Immigrant Gateway to America" by Erika Lee and Judy Yung

Below: A visitor on Angel Island.



Courtesy Angel Island Company

On the Lighter Side



"This next song's about pain."

Copyright © J.C. Duffy/The New Yorker Collection/
www.cartoonbank.com



Eric & Bill

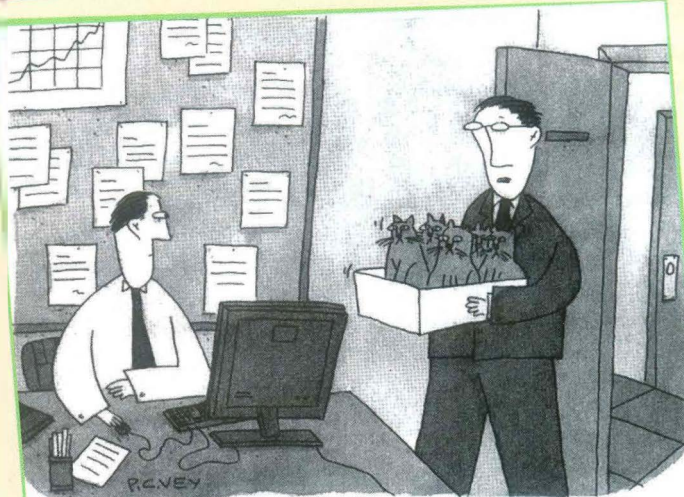
*"At one point I did stop to smell the roses—
but I was arrested for trespassing."*

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"Well you're off to a good start."

Copyright © 2010 Saturday Evening Post Society.
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*"Can you keep these in your office till
the employee evaluations are over?"*

By P.C. Vey. Copyright © 2008.



18 Miles of Books

Text by KAREN HOFSTEIN
Photographs by JILL WALKER

With five floors of books, rare collectibles and literary events, the **Strand Book Store** in New York City is a one-stop shop for book lovers.



There's nothing pretty about the inside of the Strand Book Store. Its floors are scuffed, the book tables are old, and the chairs are strictly of the functional variety. But these things only add to its charm, and even though they may have never been there before, people from around the world who visit the shop for the first time experience a sense of déjà vu. That's because its interior is familiar to anyone who has seen the movie "Julie & Julia," or the television shows "Sex and the City" and "Absolutely Fabulous." Such media exposure has made the 83-year-old shop the prototypical bookstore.

Located in an unassuming building on the corner of

Left: Rows of books at the Strand Book Store.



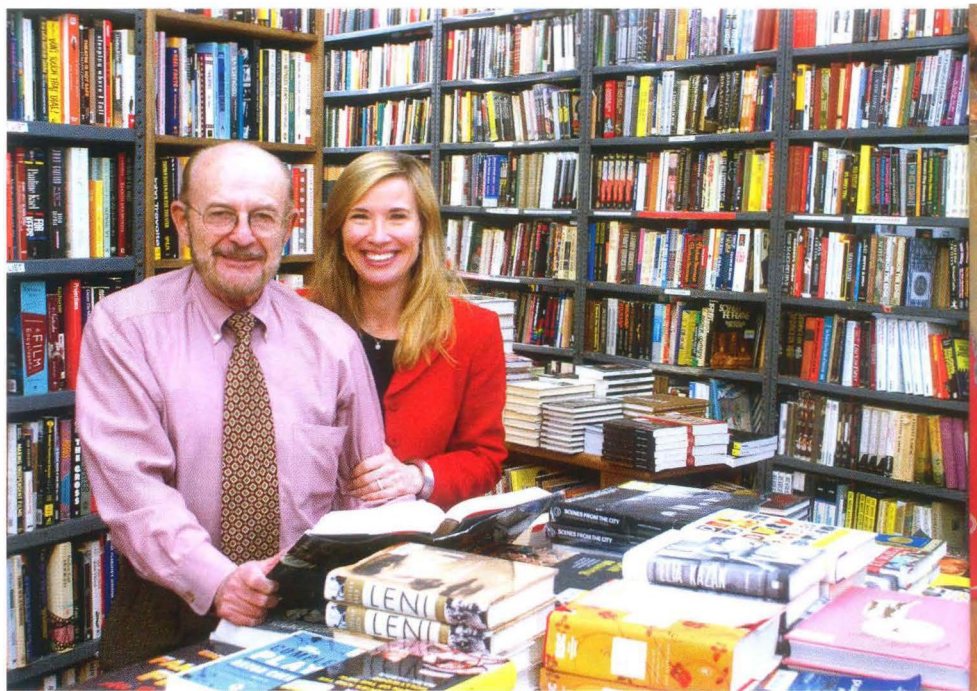
The Strand also assembles libraries for customers, and many celebrities, such as the pop star Moby, have used this service for their homes.

Broadway and East 12th Street, the Strand occupies five floors, four of which are open to the public. High ceilings accommodate bookshelves that reach up to two-and-a-half meters, with a ladder always on hand to give customers access to the top shelves. Owner Fred Bass estimates that the Strand contains 18 miles, or nearly 30 kilometers of books, and the store's logo, emblazoned on bags, mugs and T-shirts, shows a red oval with the slogan, "18 Miles of Books."

Founded in 1927 by Bass' father, Ben, the store was named after the famous publishing street in London. Now operated by the third generation of the Bass family, the Strand continues to have an international flavor. Influenced by the bookstalls near the Seine River in Paris, the store operates similar book kiosks near Central Park.

The Strand's clientele are fiercely loyal and frequently invoke the word "love" to describe their feelings about the store. Authors including Umberto Eco, Fran Lebowitz and Frank McCourt have said it is their favorite bookstore. The store regularly hosts readings by authors such as David Sedaris, James Ellroy and Jhumpa Lahiri. Artists from Chuck Close to Christo and Jeanne-Claude have exhibited their work at the Strand. The shop's readings, lectures and exhibitions are widely attended, and for those who can't be there in person, the Strand's Web site features streaming coverage of live events. The Strand also allows people not attending an event to pre-order signed copies of books.

Nancy Bass Wyden, who runs the Strand with her father, says, "We consider ourselves to be a real booklover's bookstore. We are a destination. All our books are discounted. We are only one store,



family-run and independent."

In a city with innumerable corporate-owned bookstores, the Strand has survived and thrived. It offers books and services that other stores do not. In addition to new books, it sells out-of-print and rare editions. The Strand also assembles libraries for customers, and many celebrities, such as the pop star Moby, have used this service for their homes. Wyden says, "The thought of putting books that we love on someone else's shelves is really thrilling. Almost everyone here has a college degree and has majored in literature. So we don't just sell books. We love books."

Roughly 6,000 to 8,000 people visit the store each day. In an informal weekday survey, Wyden noted that 22 percent of customers came from overseas and 33 percent were from outside the New York area. Many people seek books not available in their home countries or states, and, as Wyden notes, "We will ship anywhere—even overseas." Not surprisingly, the Strand has a thriving Internet business, and with

relatively minor exceptions all stock in the store is available online. Art books are especially popular, and the store has one of the world's largest art book sections. Wyden says, "The fun thing about actually shopping in the store that you don't have on the Internet is serendipity, the tactile experience of touching the books. Some people come in every day looking for things that are unusual. It is a treasure hunt."

The highlight of any visit to the Strand is the Rare Book Room on the third floor of the store. Staffed by a team of experts, a sign on the wall states, "Collectibles for Everyone." In the center of the room is the "Gold Vault," a large, former bank safe that now contains the most valuable books in the store. Peering into the window of the Gold Vault, one can see an illustrated copy of "Ulysses" signed by James Joyce and Henri Matisse; a first edition of "Gone with the Wind;" and a complete set of Mark Twain's books signed by the author with his pen name and his real name, Samuel Clemens.

For more information:

Strand Book Store

<http://www.strandbooks.com/>



This Author's Édition de Luxe of Mark Twain's Works is limited to 620 copies, of which only 600 copies are for sale in Great Britain and its dependencies.

This is No. 22

SLC
(Mark Twain)

Above far left: A sign at the Strand Book Store.

Above left: Fred Bass and his daughter, Nancy Bass Wyden, at the store.

Above: Shoppers and browsers alike find something to interest them among the huge array of books and related items in the bookstore.

Left: A copy of Mark Twain's Works signed by the author.

Referring to a \$150 book signed by Norman Mailer, Wyden says, "A lot of old books are really affordable. These are meaningful. The signed book is a connection to the author."

To maintain its stock, the Strand purchases tens of thousands of used books. Its buying desk is open six days a week. Many customers resell their books to the store. Wyden laughs and says, "We like to say 'Reuse. Recycle. Reread.'" Bass, 82, is the head buyer. He notes, "We buy several thousand a day over this counter, and

then there are private collections where we get in maybe 50, 60, 70 boxes at a time." The books range from used copies to fine, rare editions. Bass says, "I deal with a lot of antiquarian books."

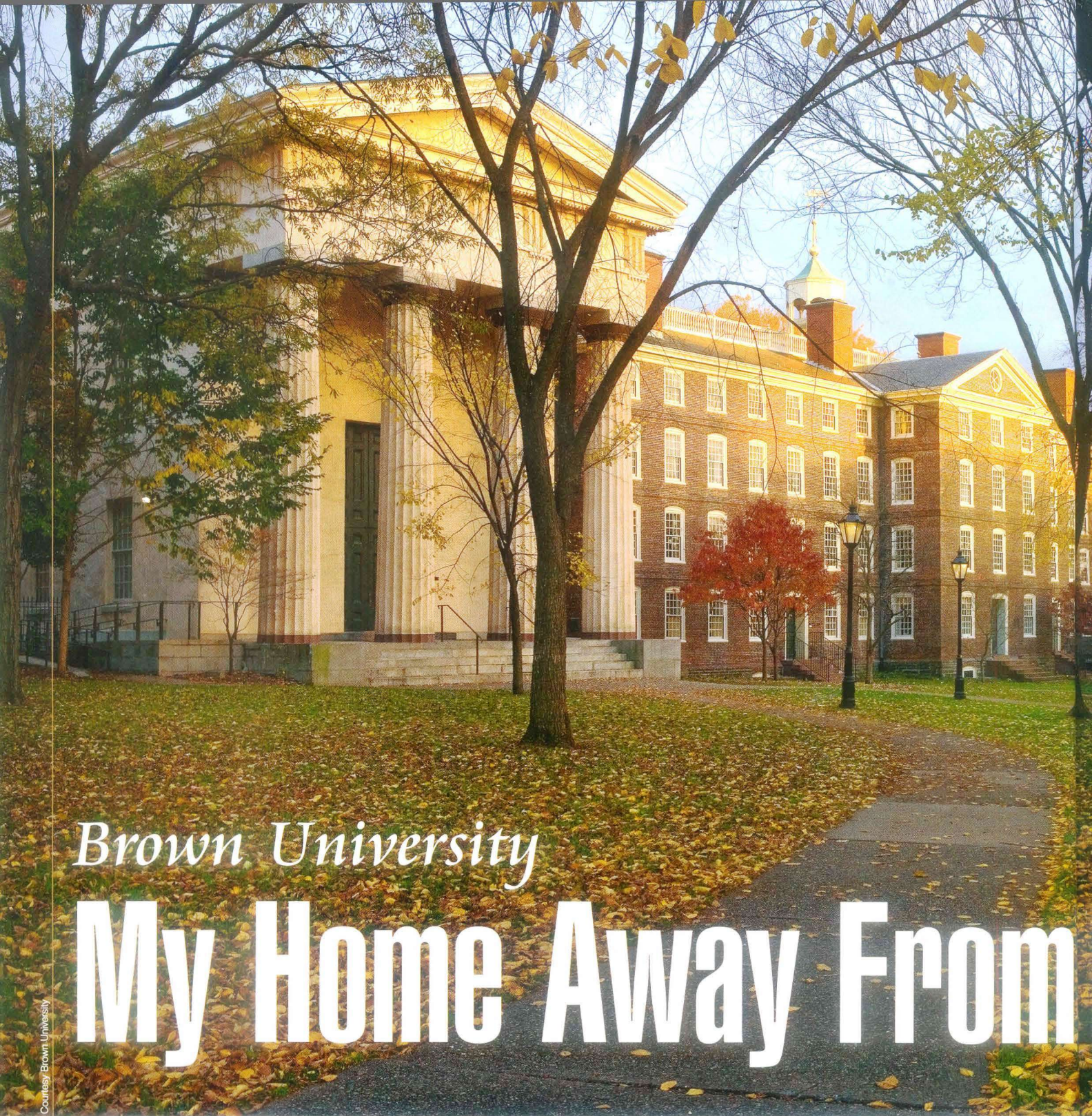
When asked if he thinks competition from the Internet or e-readers like NOOK and Kindle pose a risk to the Strand, Bass says, "It is not a threat, but it changes the business quite a bit. I think in a way it is going to stimulate the business. A lot of people actually want to see the book before they buy it. Our prices are actually quite

comparable so that it may be cheaper to buy the book." Bass adds, whimsically, "You know, when TV first came in we thought people would not buy books."

With an eye on the future, the Strand has an expansive children's department. Every Thursday at 3:30 p.m., there is a family hour featuring readings for children, followed by an arts-and-crafts project tied to the reading. On a recent day, "Forever Friends" was featured, and the project was weaving friendship bracelets.

Bass, who grew up working in the store and returned to it after a stint in the U.S. Army, says, "I tell you one thing, a tremendous amount of young people are shopping here. They come into the store day and night." He chuckles, "And a tremendous amount of old people like me. It is stimulating to see what is going on. The book is not dead yet. Reading is not dead yet. We have great hopes for the future."

Karen Hofstein is a special correspondent with America.gov.



Courtesy Brown University

Brown University

My Home Away From

By DHRUV RAWAT

The university gives students the opportunity to study what they like, the way they like.

Can you imagine studying only what you like? Can you imagine interacting with some of the most dynamic individuals you will ever meet in your life? Can you imagine becoming a part of traditions that range from the inspiring to the funny? If you answered any of these questions in the affirmative, I am pleased to introduce you to Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, my physical and intellectual home for the next four years.



Home

For more information:

Brown University

<http://www.brown.edu/>

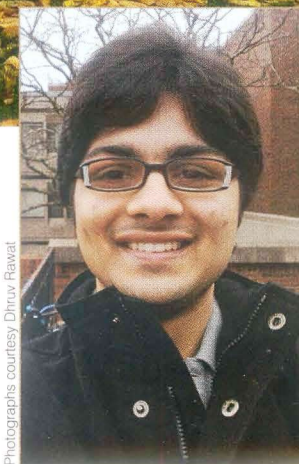
Cave Automatic Virtual Environment

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cave_Automatic_Virtual_Environment

Above: Manning Chapel (left), stands beside University Hall, a brick building which was built before the American Revolution. It now serves as the main administration building of Brown University.

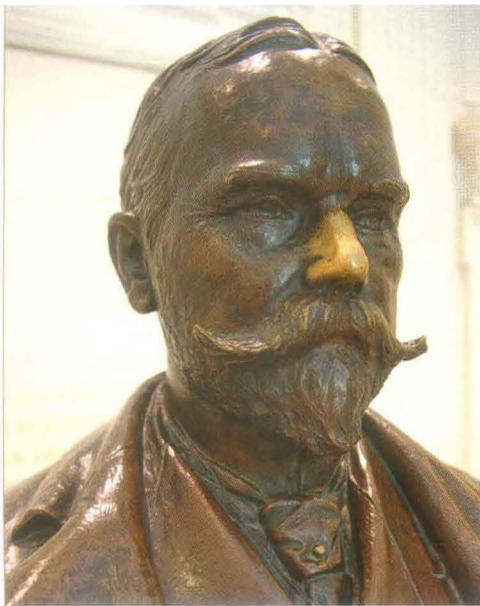
Right: Dhruv Rawat.

Far right: The Dumbbell Nebula, one of the three astronomical objects Rawat captured through a telescope at Brown University.

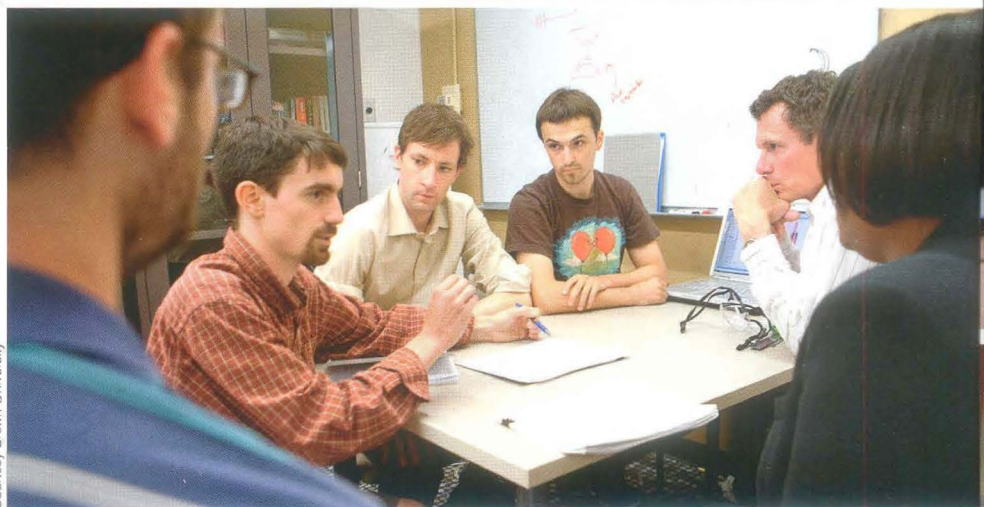


Photographs courtesy Dhruv Rawat





Courtesy Brown University Library



Courtesy Brown University

*Above: The bust of John Hay at the library.
Above right: The reading room at the John Hay Library.
Right: Graduate students meet with professors from a variety of disciplines.*

In my opinion, what sets Brown apart is the New Curriculum. Incorporated into the university's education system in 1969, it gives every Brunonian the right to direct the course of his or her education. By giving students the opportunity to override general education requirements and to even design their own concentration (Brown's term for majors), the curriculum allows students to study what they like, the way they like.

In my first semester, I experienced some of the finest technologies Brown has to offer. For my course on Introductory

Astronomy, I spent some time working with one of the two telescopes we have at the university to take some stunning images of the Triangulum Galaxy, the Dumbbell Nebula and the Veil Nebula. Similarly, the Cave Automatic Virtual Environment can catapult people to magnificent landscapes by generating a virtual reality environment through projectors that are directed to multiple walls of a room-sized cube that sits in a larger room. These technologies make learning fun.

My first semester memories are filled

with interesting interactions. From discussing problems of computer science with my geology professor over Indian food to analyzing the meteoric rise of Harry Potter and the dramatic fall of Britney Spears with my English professor to probing the very meaning of life with my Hispanic roommate, the conversations I have had with my fellows at Brown have been among the most rewarding in my life. Since there is so much to absorb just by conversing, socialization is not coerced, but encouraged here.

One of the perks of living in such a place is the things you can learn from your peers. Hailing from over 90 countries, they expose you to a wide spectrum of cultures and opinions. They give meaning to your life beyond the confines of the classroom.

No article on an American university can be complete without talking about its traditions. One of these at Brown is the long walk through the Van Wickle Gates, a stately structure which opens only twice a year, to welcome the freshman class and to bid adieu to the

2012-13

Fulbright-Nehru Fellowships in the U.S.



The United States-India Educational Foundation (USIEF) invites applications for Fulbright-Nehru and other fellowships from

Indian citizens, including students, college, university and school teachers, researchers, policy planners, administrators and other professionals.

To view complete details and download applications, please visit USIEF's Web site:

www.usief.org.in

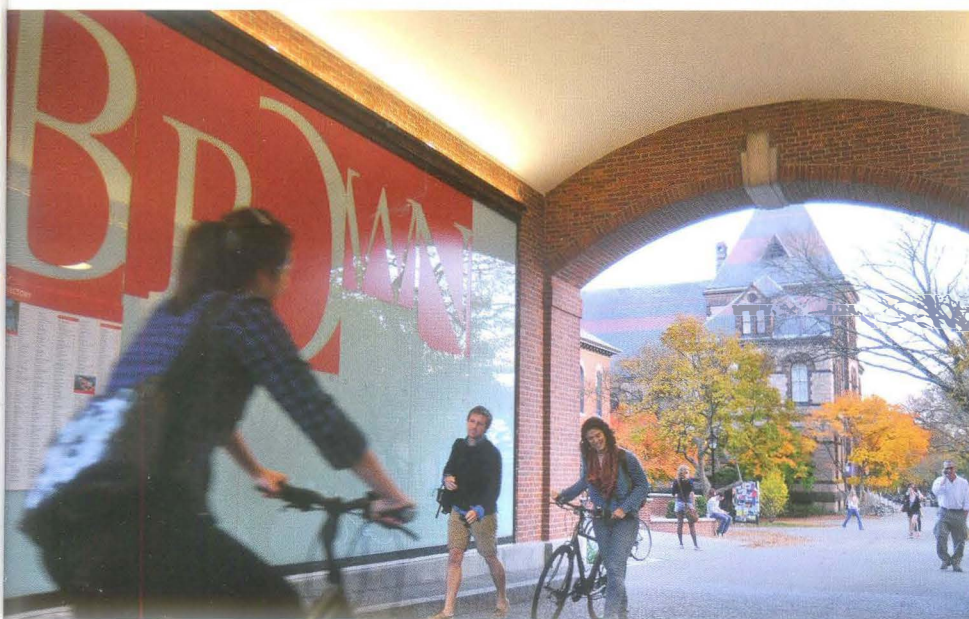
Due dates for submission of 2012-2013 applications begin

May 1, 2011

If you have questions, e-mail them to: lp@usief.org.in



Photo: The University of Brown



***Above:** The wrought iron Van Wickles Gates open twice during the academic year—in September, when the freshman class makes an official entry, and in May, when the graduating seniors walk out during the commencement procession.*

***Left:** Students cycle through the recently renovated Faunce Arch, an entry to the campus center and a meeting place for students.*

graduating class. Having walked through them just a few months back, I can vouch for the beauty of the feeling. Marching through makes you think about all those people who have done it before you and gone on to make a mark for themselves.

Other traditions at Brown include the Midnight Organ Concert on Halloween and the great Brown Band trip to the dormitories for Thanksgiving. Before I forget, if you ever run out of luck at Brown, simply rub the nose of the bust of John Hay at the John Hay Library and you are back on track! Even if you are not at the library, you can use your mouse pointer for a virtual

nose-rubbing. These traditions might seem absurd and juvenile, but they play a pivotal role in fostering a community feeling.

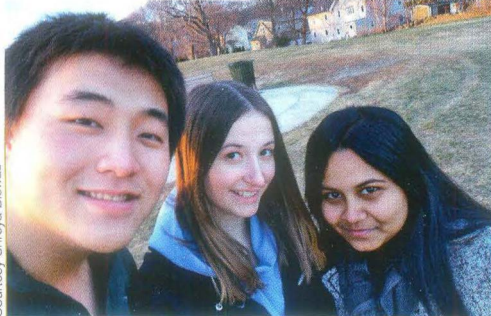
My motive in taking you, perhaps a prospective applicant to a U.S. university, on a journey through Brown is simple: I want you to realize the importance of short-listing universities during the application process. Brown is the perfect fit for someone with interests all over the place, such as me. But is it for you?

If you could only take one thought away from this article, it should be this: Think twice before you include a school on your list of prospective universities. Including

all Ivy League colleges or applying to 20 schools isn't going to increase your odds of getting that prized acceptance letter from one of them. Question yourself when your heart falls for a university. Do you really want to go to the place you just wrote on your list or is it there because of its high U.S. News and World Report ranking? If possible, talk to people who are studying at a university you are considering. If you cannot envision yourself at a given university, chances are the Admission Committee won't, either.

I made a couple of silly decisions when shortlisting universities. Luckily for me, it worked out, for I got into Brown, one of my top choices. To all the U.S.-bound applicants, I wish you the very best for the application process and dearly hope you get to call your prospective alma mater your "home away from home."

***Dhruv Rawat** is a computer science student at Brown University in Rhode Island.*



Ambition Beyond Boundaries

By SHREYA BISWAS

The United States continues to be the favored destination for a majority of international students, including Indians, and with good reason. Along with the opportunity to specialize in niche and unconventional fields in natural sciences and humanities, an American college education offers flexibility of curriculum.

For instance, I intend to major in biochemistry. Yet, this past semester, along with the classes required for my major, I took a class in cultural anthropology. This enabled me to learn more about the diverse cultures worldwide, something I was always interested in, without having to change my major.

Gaining a broad perspective of the world is especially beneficial in today's scenario where employers are looking for recruits with a well-rounded skill set. U.S. universities provide the scope of complementing theory with practice through internships, undergraduate research and on-campus work opportunities. Most colleges in the United States are also generous with financial aid to deserving international students. Further, since there is no dearth of international representation on their campuses, U.S. universities constitute a global village of students.

Though the application protocol for most American universities is fairly uniform and generally requires a large investment of time, it may vary slightly depending on the institution. I began preparing for the standardized tests in the latter half of my 11th grade. Undergraduate students are usually required to take three standardized tests—the SAT Reasoning Test, the TOEFL test, and in some cases, the SAT Subject Tests as well. Information on how to register for these tests, as well as the preparatory materials for them, can be obtained from the College Board's Web site (www.collegeboard.org). A few uni-

versities often waive the requirement for an English proficiency test such as the TOEFL if a student's critical reading sub-score in the SAT Reasoning Test is above a stipulated cut-off.

Since the scores for these tests are valid for a maximum of two years, and attempting the same test more than once is permitted, it is usual and advisable for applicants to begin taking them in their junior year of high school. It is important to remember that a valid passport is necessary for entry to test centers.

After tackling the tests comes the task of selecting schools. It is wise to look at the strength of a particular academic program, the percentage acceptance rates, and the availability of financial aid, among others, instead of relying solely upon rankings. A college that has the best program in computer science might not be considered equally strong for philosophy. One needs to figure out the best match on the basis of one's ambitions and career aspirations.

For some first-time international undergraduate students, the availability of on-campus housing, at least for the first year, may be a major factor. For others, like me, class sizes may be important. One of the reasons I chose to attend Clark University



in Worcester, Massachusetts, apart from the availability of undergraduate research opportunities in biochemistry, was its small class sizes. This made the transition from high school to a full-fledged university a lot easier.

After choosing universities, it is time to concentrate on the application packet. While high scores on the standardized tests and stellar grades in school enhance an applicant's chances of acceptance, it is rare for U.S. colleges to take only grades into account.

The application packet usually comprises the college essay, letter(s) of recommendation written by teachers, academic transcripts and financial certification. Additionally, some universities may also seek a second essay from students

USIEF Sessions

Attending the information sessions and college fairs organized by the United States-India Educational Foundation (USIEF) in New Delhi, was of immense help to me while selecting colleges. Personnel from U.S. universities attend these fairs. The USIEF library also has several college catalogs and college guides. Browsing through these can help you come up with a preliminary list of about 10 to 15 universities, which can be further narrowed down to a final list of about nine to 11 schools.

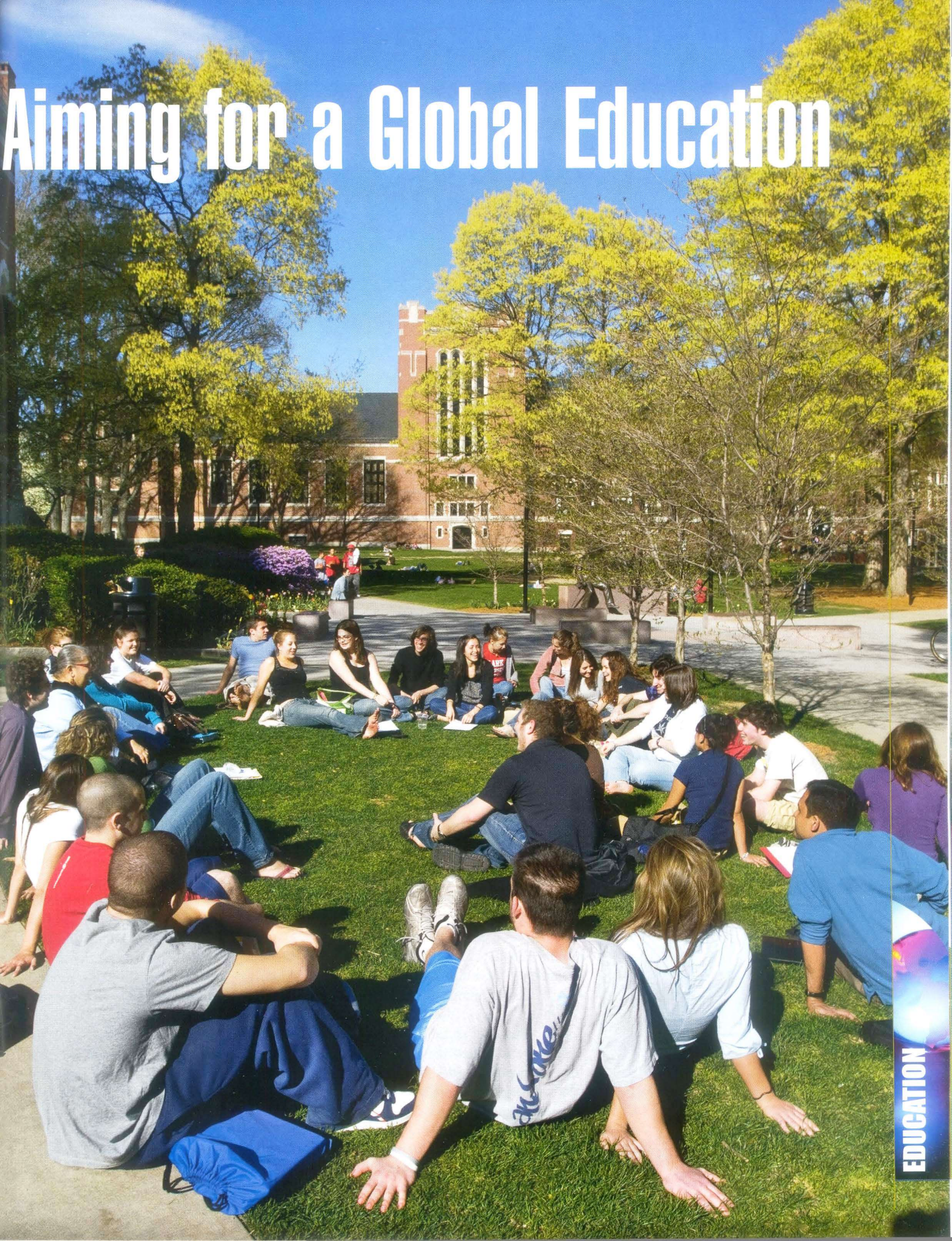
<http://www.usief.org.in/>

Top left: Clark students Zimu Chen (from left), Elisabeth Batch and Shreya Biswas.

Above: Members of Clark University's Class of 2010 celebrate outside Atwood Hall after the commencement ceremony.

Right: Taking advantage of fine weather, a class is conducted outdoors on the main campus green at Clark University.

Aiming for a Global Education





Above: Students at Clark University's Goddard Library.

Above right: The Clark Bars, a student cappella group, performs in Atwood Hall at the university.



wishing to apply for scholarships.

When it comes to writing the college essay, a little brainstorming can go a long way. The essay functions as the metaphorical "peek through the curtain" that lets the admission committee know what inspires you, as a person. Think of it as an opportunity to demonstrate that you are

more than your grades. Talk about how you can be a unique addition to an already diverse college community. It is best to use a natural writing tone and steer clear of hyperbole. Originality and brevity are important, as is a need to respect the word limit, if any.

Recommendation letters are meant to provide insight into a student's academic and extracurricular achievements. Request teachers who have known you well as a student at least four to six months in advance, since writing a recommendation requires time.

The next component is the academic transcript. For undergraduate applicants, most universities require an official academic transcript describing the grades obtained by a student during four years of high school. In case an official transcript is not available, universities generally accept photocopies of mark sheets that are attested and certified to be true copies by the school principal. Finally, students seeking financial assistance should contact the university regarding the forms they need to complete.

Students can consolidate their application by highlighting any involvement in community service or achievements in sports. However, remember to mention only those activities that you have pursued for a considerable period of time. Any extraneous information can weaken an otherwise strong application.

Most U.S. colleges have application deadlines in December and January. But it is advisable not to wait until the end. If you

think you would not be able to make the stipulated deadline for a particular university, it is worth e-mailing the admission committee to negotiate the deadline. Generally, universities will accommodate if they feel that an applicant is genuinely interested in applying to that school.

Visiting a new country for a short period can be fun, but living and studying there is a different experience. The transition involves physical, mental and social challenges. For instance, during the first few days in the United States, it is normal for students to experience some degree of cultural disorientation and homesickness. It is important to allow yourself ample time to get accustomed to the new way of life.

Nearly all universities have an assortment of activities, often known as ice-breakers, lined up for orientation week. Such events are a great way to mingle with other students in your year, outside the classroom environment. While friendships with Indian students are certainly a vital source of support, interacting and networking with other international and American students expedites the process of integration into the university environment. Remember that college is a fresh experience for every newcomer, even for domestic students. An education overseas can be fulfilling, both academically and personally, provided one makes the best use of this novel opportunity.

Shreya Biswas is a student at Clark University in Massachusetts.

Common Application Form

One way to stay organized during the application process is through the common application form. It is accepted by a large number of U.S. universities. The Common Application Web site (<https://www.commonapp.org/>) allows users to add schools and apply to all of them through a single form. Students can then view a checklist of the various documents required in the application packet for each of the universities that they have added to their list. Schools that do not accept the common application form generally have a separate form that can be submitted online. However, it is worthwhile to e-mail the admissions office to double-check and clarify any queries related to the application requirements.

South Asia Centers Bring Region to Life Inside U.S.

By CARRIE LOEWENTHAL MASSEY

A network of South Asia Centers across nine American universities is allowing students to enjoy an authentic Indian experience.



Courtesy University of Pennsylvania

Students in Philadelphia are often able to enjoy a leisurely day in India, wandering in and out of shops, stopping for a lunch of *naan*, curry, and *samosas*, catching the latest Bollywood matinee and chatting in Hindi or Urdu.

Though these students are still in the United States, they participate in a version of an authentic Indian experience through Hindi and Urdu language education programs hosted by the University of Pennsylvania's South Asia Center. It is

Above: Students at University of Pennsylvania's South Asia Center learn how to wear a sari as part of their lessons on South Asian languages and cultures.



Students participate in the Holi festival at the University of Pennsylvania in 2010.

one in a network of national resource centers (NRCs) across the United States that focus on South Asia.

For the last two summers, the university, known as Penn, has welcomed American secondary school students and teachers and immersed them in Hindi and Urdu lessons and the cultures of South Asia. Penn partnered with teachers in India who corresponded via videoconference with the U.S. participants. The courses featured traditional Indian food for lunches, dance instruction to Indian music, field trips to South Asian art collections at Philadelphia art museums and visits to mosques and temples.

The courses provided the experience of being in the culture and learning the language, says Raili Roy, assistant director of the South Asia Center at Penn.

There are nine South Asia resource centers in the United States. The others are at Columbia University, University of Chicago, University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Texas at Austin, University of Washington, University of Michigan, University of California, Berkeley and a joint Cornell University-Syracuse University center.

Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, the centers seek to build American expertise in South Asian languages and bol-

ster American universities' capacities to educate in global cultures and affairs. There are 125 national resource centers in total, covering different world regions and languages.

The goal "is to be a center of excellence that offers depth of specialized course coverage...and produces graduates with exceptional area or international studies and foreign language expertise and knowledge," says Cheryl Gibbs, senior program officer at the Department of Education, via e-mail.

The South Asia centers focus on India, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and the Seychelles, covering language instruction in Bengali, Hindi, Gujarati, Kannada, Marathi, Punjabi, Pashto, Persian, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu.

Until 2013, the South Asia national resource centers are making it a priority to train American primary and secondary school teachers. The centers also focus on strengthening international studies and language course offerings at the universities, partnering with other universities and international organizations, hosting conferences on issues relevant to their regions and building specialized libraries.

To address the teacher-training objective, Columbia University's South Asia Institute will offer courses for teachers on India's images of the feminine, dance in Asia and Indian cinema, in spring 2011. It also provides workshops for secondary school and community college instructors of Hindi and Urdu.

At the University of Michigan, the national resource centers are launching a

world history initiative, through which university professors will provide presentations on world regions to educate secondary school teachers and encourage innovative lesson planning. The initiative aims to support "the creation, pilot testing and dissemination of new, high-quality and globally focused curricular units," Gibbs says.

Several centers plan to introduce Pashto and Marathi language programs while also enhancing scholarship on Pakistan and Afghanistan. In October 2011, Columbia will host a conference on Bangladesh and Pakistan, addressing the two countries' security, social movements, art, politics and more. Preceding Columbia's event, Penn will host a conference in April 2011 on health and economic intervention initiatives in India.

"We are bringing in experts from India who are working directly in that field to initiate a conversation between them and experts in the U.S.," Roy says.

In 1957, when the Soviet Union launched Sputnik, the first satellite, the United States responded by infusing its education infrastructure with not only greater attention to science and technology training, but also a new focus on world regions, foreign languages and international affairs. In 1958, the U.S. Congress passed the National Defense Education Act, which established the national resource centers. The first South Asia centers opened in 1959 at Penn, the University of California, Berkeley and the University of Chicago.



Carrie Loewenthal Massey is a special correspondent with America.gov.

For more information:

University of Pennsylvania's South Asia Center

<http://www.southasiacenter.upenn.edu/>

National Resource Centers

<http://www.nrcweb.org/>

Warren Buffett (left) and Bill Gates play table tennis at the annual Berkshire Hathaway shareholders meeting in Omaha, Nebraska.



NATI HARNIK © AP/WIDE

The Giving Pledge encourages American billionaires to give the bulk of their fortunes to charity.

The list is growing.

Giving

(Almost) All of It Away

By PHILLIP KURATA

The two richest men in the United States, Bill Gates and Warren Buffett, are encouraging other billionaires, in America and abroad, to give away the bulk of their fortunes to philanthropic causes.

Gates, a co-founder of the software giant Microsoft Corporation, and Buffett, chairman of the Berkshire Hathaway Inc. investment company, launched their campaign, the Giving Pledge, in June 2010 to invite the wealthiest individuals and families in the United States to commit to giving away at least 50 percent of their wealth to philanthropy.

Steve Case, the founder of the Internet company AOL Inc., and his wife, Jean, his

co-chair at the Case Foundation, signed the pledge recently.

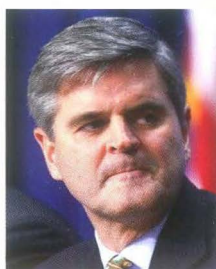
"We have learned a lot over the years, both through our philanthropic successes and our failures, and believe that by working together and exchanging lessons learned, the impact of the backers of the Giving Pledge can be enhanced," Steve and Jean Case said in a statement. "That is why we are joining...so many others to make this public commitment."

As of February 2011, 58 billionaires have joined the campaign. Forbes magazine

For more information:

The Giving Pledge

<http://givingpledge.org/>



CHARLE D'ARAPAK © AP/WIDE

We share the view that those to whom much is given, much is expected. We do not believe our assets are "ours" but rather we try to be the responsible stewards of these resources.

Steve and Jean Case



JACQUELYN MARTIN © AP/WIDEWORLD

We have been blessed with good fortune beyond our wildest expectations, and we are profoundly grateful. But just as these gifts are great, so we feel a great responsibility to use them well. That is why we are so pleased to join in making an explicit commitment to the Giving Pledge.

Bill and Melinda Gates

estimates the charitable contributions will amount to \$600 billion.

"The idea of dynastic wealth is crazy," Buffett told ABC News in November. "The idea that you should be able to do nothing in this world for the rest of your life and [the lives of] your children and grandchildren...does not really seem to be very American." Buffett, 80, said his wealth has come from a fortuitous set of factors, including being born in the United States with its free-market system.

On numerous occasions, Buffett has said he has accumulated enormous wealth because of his skill in identifying underpriced stocks, while other people have done more noble things in their lives without receiving much material benefit. To illustrate his point, he said soldiers who

save the lives of their comrades in battle are rewarded with medals and great teachers get thank-you notes. He says that he is deeply grateful for what life has brought him, and his goal now is to use his wealth intelligently so it benefits the maximum number of people.

"I want to do the most intelligent job I can without respect to whether the recipients are male or female or black or white or American or African or whatever," he said. "I want my money to have the greatest impact on improving the lives of the most people."

Buffett plans to give away 99 percent of his fortune to philanthropy, with 75 percent of it going to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, which targets improving global health and the U.S. education system.

"Great wealth brings incredible, enormous responsibility" to give back to society, Melinda Gates said in the same television news interview.

Buffett and Bill Gates visited China in September 2010 and plan a visit to India in 2011 to meet with wealthy people and talk about philanthropy.

Explaining why their foundation donated \$90 million to help the Tennessee school system, Melinda Gates said she felt the schools were preparing only one-third of the students for university, and a democracy cannot be sustained by a citizenry with so few university graduates. Developing innovative teaching approaches and curriculums and providing technology in each classroom requires extra

Making a difference in people's lives—and seeing it with your own eyes—is perhaps the most satisfying thing you'll ever do. If you want to fully enjoy life—give.

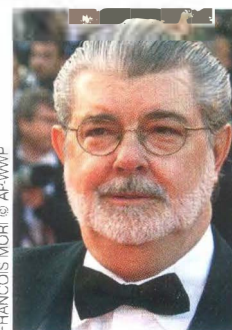
Michael Bloomberg



money, she said.

The Gates Foundation and Buffett target immediate needs, avoiding endowments, which provide long-term funding for many institutions. However, in inviting other billionaires to join the campaign, they leave the question of how to give to each person.

Michael Marsicano, author of the article "Philanthropy Distinguishes America" published in the Triangle Business Journal, points out that there is some financial reward from the U.S. government when it comes to charitable donations and that respect for individual choices regarding giving is also an American trait. The U.S. tax code rewards citizens who give to charities by reducing their taxes, even when those charities contradict the government.



FRANCOIS MORI © AP/WIDEWORLD

I am dedicating the majority of my wealth to improving education. It is the key to the survival of the human race.

George Lucas

An example of such a charity is a legal aid group that provides counsel to illegal immigrants in the United States.

"This is uniquely American and profoundly important," Marsicano writes. He says individual donors and charities at times are more innovative than the levels of government in the United States. Often charities' work precedes the U.S. government's involvement in a societal problem.

For instance, Andrew Carnegie, a steel tycoon, launched the public library system in the United States with his private fortune early in the 20th century, when he saw that illiteracy was an unaddressed problem. Local governments later took over the funding and operation of public libraries.



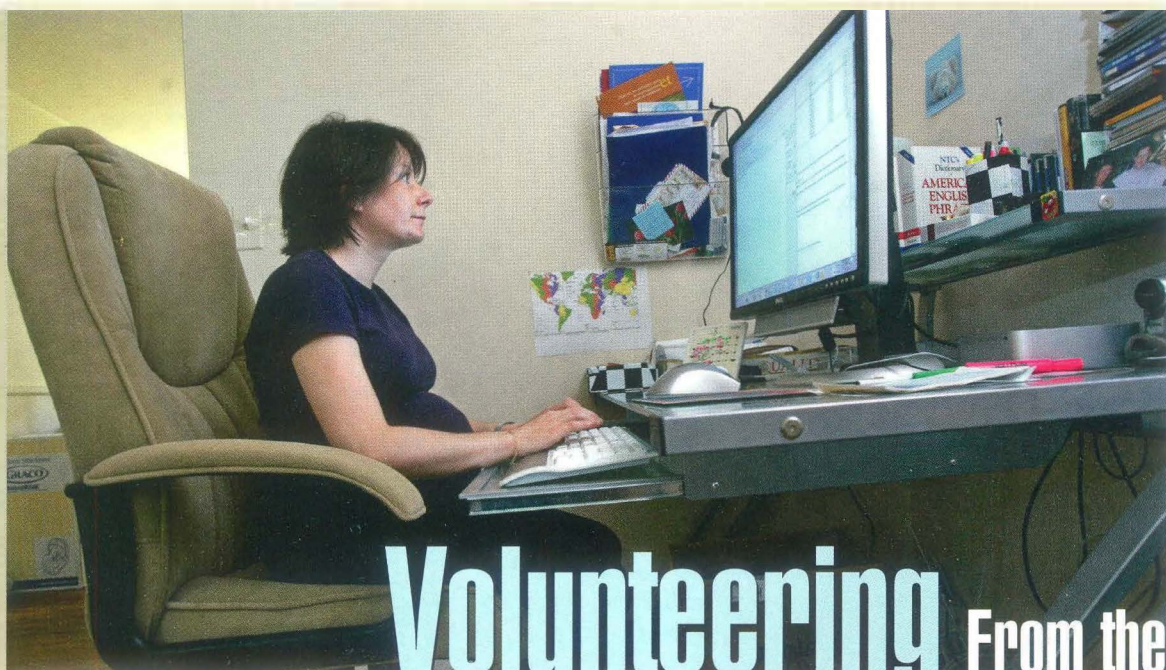
Phillip Kurata is a staff writer for America.gov.



SETH WENIG © AP/WIDEWORLD

Were we to use more than 1 percent of my claim checks [Berkshire Hathaway stock certificates] on ourselves, neither our happiness nor our well-being would be enhanced. In contrast, that remaining 99 percent can have a huge effect on the health and welfare of others.

Warren Buffett



Sandrine Cortet, an online volunteer who translates documents from her native French to English and vice versa, works at her home in Edison, New Jersey.

Volunteering From the Comfort of Home

By LINDSEY E. OECHSLE

If you have a computer, an Internet connection and skills, you can volunteer in any one of around 130 countries without leaving home.

To register for an online volunteering opportunity run by the U.N. Volunteers program, you simply provide background information about yourself before gaining login information for an account that allows you to search the world for volunteer opportunities. Opportunities through the United Nations Volunteers online volunteering service are available for you to work from your computer, where you are.

A search for a volunteer opportunity in English involving writing and editing and devoting one to five hours per week offers 51 volunteer opportunities, from Germany to Ghana. French and Spanish volunteer opportunities are also available.

Online volunteers completed 14,313 assignments in 2009, doubling the previous year's record.

Every year, more than 9,000 online volunteers help nonprofits through the Online Volunteering service, which is entering its 10th year. They come from nearly 160 countries and work for 20 different U.N. organizations.

Nongovernmental organizations, governments and U.N. agencies recognize the benefit of this virtual Peace Corps-type of work force and regularly utilize it. Some 1,347 nonprofits are registered with the service.

Online volunteers provide more than valuable expertise. As the reach of the Internet continues to expand, they come from an increasingly varied number of locations, and their diverse cultural backgrounds mean projects gain from fresh perspectives.

Some online volunteers have helped develop the very nonprofits that organize projects—training staff, teaching new skills or providing advice. And many volunteers, after completing their

online commitments, share information about projects with their friends and colleagues, thereby mobilizing additional support.

In an International Volunteer Day statement in December 2010, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon welcomed the strong growth of online volunteering, which he said, "connects people around the globe...and provides them with opportunities to contribute to development and the work of the United Nations. Online volunteering has great potential, and I encourage all partners to explore what more can be done to harness the power of the Internet in this way."

The leaders of U.N. entities stress that volunteerism offers youths the opportunity to improve their own communities as well as those across the world. Young generations can be a bridge between cultures and can serve as key agents in promoting peace and dialogue.

"Civic engagement is central to building cohesive communities, and to promoting young people's integration into society. Greater efforts should thus be made to guarantee that young women and men have the opportunity to participate in these types of activities," U.N. leaders said in a statement designating 2010 to 2011 as the International Year of Youth.

According to Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland, volunteers contribute \$400 billion to the global economy every year. But their contribution is more than merely financial, says Flavia Pansieri, United Nations Volunteers executive coordinator. "Volunteerism contributes to promoting the inclusion of those who don't participate. It contributes to social cohesion in situations where the link of trust between citizens and state has been broken by conflict."

Testimonials provided by United Nations Volunteers from online volunteers report joyful, life-changing experiences, satisfaction in fulfilling civic duties and a sense of empowerment.

In Kolkata or Connecticut, the United Nations Volunteer program allows you to serve from home.

For more information:

Volunteering in America

<http://www.volunteeringinamerica.gov/>

U.N. Volunteers

<http://www.unv.org/>

Lindsey E. Oechsle is a staff writer with America.gov.

Emily May

Combating Harassment Through Technology

By PAROMITA PAIN

Like most good ideas, this started out simple. In the summer of 2005, Emily May and a group of friends discussed how common street harassment was in New York City. "Catcalls, jeers and unpleasant suggestions made us feel like the streets didn't belong to us. We were feeling unsafe in our own cities," says May. "We wanted to reach out to women, share stories and show that no one was alone in this. At that time, blogging wasn't what it is today but it was a good way to reach out."

The result was Hollaback, a Web site dedicated to ending street harassment. Women can write about their experiences on the online forum and upload photos.

"Street harassment is such an under addressed issue," says May, one of the sites co-founders. "No matter where you are in the world this is one crime that is rarely taken seriously."

Sharing stories

Within six months, publicised through other blogs and mostly through word of mouth, stories from outside New York and the United States poured in. "We understood that street harassment wasn't just about us. It was an international epidemic," says May.

No one expected Hollaback to draw in so many members in such a short while. But few had then thought that by 2010

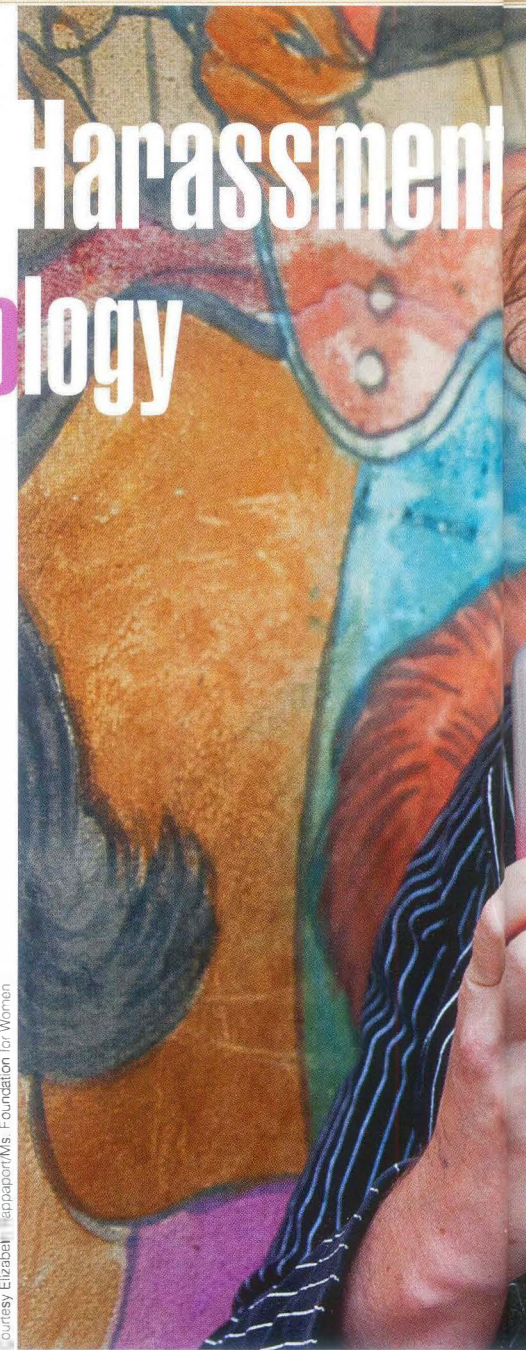
this would become an iPhone and Droid application that would allow users to report harassment in seconds. The data sent through the application is automatically mapped and a follow-up e-mail from Hollaback asks for details about what happened.

May has no tech background. Money to fund the product development was scarce. "We thought foundations would donate," she says, "but none did." So May and her associates posted notices asking for donations on the Web site, Kickstarter, and 400 people donated the \$12,500 they needed. "Basically 400 people helped develop it," says May. They submitted it to Apple who then approved the application. More than 1,000 people have downloaded it already. "...It's available only in the States at the moment," says May. "We are testing what people think of it to make changes later." Earlier versions allowed people to only pinpoint their locations, but now they can type in their stories simultaneously.

Funded by time

Hollaback was run for five years without money. From 2010, May, now executive director, and one part-timer earn salaries. A lot of funding comes from individuals and revenue is generated in terms of the time that volunteers donate to the site. So some people, foundations and private donors give money while others volunteer to monitor the blog, put up links and edit material. "It's amazing that in spite of being volunteer driven we attract incredibly talented people and today have six different departments with team leaders," says May. Of the original members, one is a board chair. Most of them have gone on to earn Ph.D. degrees.

"Some of the founders aren't as involved



as before but the decisions we made years ago still ring true and reflect in the decisions I make today. We have also grown with the project," says May.

Hollaback in India

Hollaback works internationally and plans to open at least six sites every quarter. Its India site, based in Mumbai, was launched in January and is run by Aisha Zakira. "Street harassment is a serious problem in India and is commonly known as 'eve teasing.' That's not cool—there is absolute-

courtesy Elizabeth Lappaport/MS Foundation for Women

For more information:

Hollaback

<http://www.ihollaback.org/>

Hollaback, Mumbai

<http://mumbai.ihollaback.org/>

Kickstarter

<http://www.kickstarter.com/>



ly nothing a woman can do to 'ask for it.' The word 'teasing' trivializes an act that as women who have experienced it know, is isolating, painful and deeply frustrating. Not to mention frightening," says Zakira.

While it is still in the process of being publicised through women's organizations, publications, blogs and newspapers, heartbreaking stories of what harassment can do are already pouring in.

Sample this: "I purposely buy clothes that are too big for me. I purposely go out

wearing baggy clothes because I feel that when I wear something that shows skin, men stare at me more. Actually, they stare no matter what I wear, but even more when I am wearing something revealing. It should not be about what I wear."

Another site is in the offing in New Delhi.

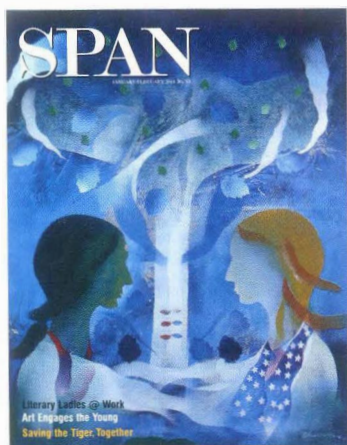
Stories like this encourage May and Zakira to continue their work. May holds training sessions in schools and among the women who run the sites, talking and explaining how harassment works and

what they do to deal with the situation better. "A 16-year-old once asked me if street harassment was normal. She thought it was happening...to her and that somehow she was responsible for it. We must understand that street harassment isn't about beauty or you really. It's simply about a wrong assertion of power," explains May. So, the next time someone "Hey baby's" you, you know what to do. Just Hollaback!

Paromita Pain is a journalist in Austin, Texas.

Krishna Kant Bajpai
Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

The excellent painting by Bhawana Choudhary Chandra signifies the importance of women being in the forefront in the U.S. and India and their collaboration.



S.M. Goyal

Ajmer, Rajasthan

In recent years, in India, a reverse trend is seen in the educational streams opted by students at the school and college level. Attractive packages offered by the corporate sector have prompted students to go for the commerce stream and the erstwhile craze for the science stream, especially the biological side, has been weakened. But "Fun with Science—A Spark for Young Minds" (January/February 2011) can indeed bring a desirable change if they read and ponder over it. Study of science is vital for national progress and security. The examples of 16-year-old Raina Jain and 19-year-old Isha Jain can certainly goad our students for their good and their country's good.

"Off to a Healthy Start" (January/February 2011), though meant for young ones, is an inspiring narration for a healthy lifestyle. In American conditions, jogging or running in the neighborhood is possible. In India, where roads are dirty, traffic uncontrolled and people lack common sense, it may not be possible. But schools can certainly take steps to encourage children to run around a sports track. That will do them good. It is quite economical, involving the cost of a pair of shoes. This habit cultivated at a young age may last long.



Dilip Mohite Vadodara, Gujarat

Wildlife is my hobby. I was extremely delighted to see how wildlife is given prominence in the U.S.A. and its Indian connection.

The SPAN Web site is exciting. It opens up a vista to a wonder world of nature, international relations, science and technology.

Working Together to Save the Tiger

The United States supports India's efforts to conserve its endangered national animal.

For the first time, the United States and India have joined forces to conserve the endangered national animal, the tiger.

At a meeting in the White House on November 10, 2010, President Obama and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh announced that the two countries will work together to conserve the tiger.

The meeting was held in the presence of Vice President Joe Biden and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.



John Alexander Nagpur, Maharashtra

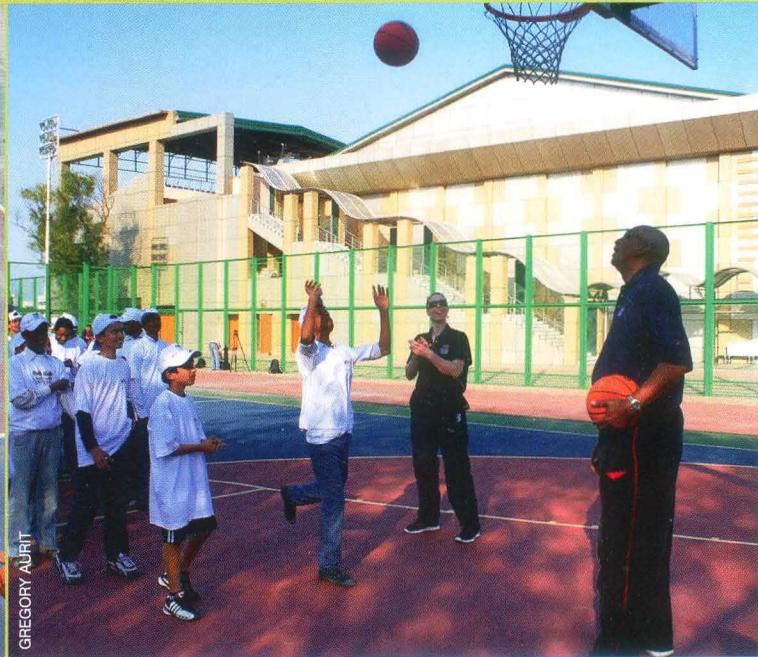
The SPAN Web site is really marching with the times in the digital age. Now it would be easy to know all about SPAN from its inception to present times—a big bonanza and dividend.



U.S. **basketball** players, George "Iceman" Gervin and Katie Smith, conducted basketball clinics, met university students and participated in community events in Mumbai (below) and New Delhi (below

right) in February. The trip was part of the U.S. State Department's SportsUnited program which promotes education and life skills through sport. The SportsUnited program partnered with the U.S. National

Basketball Association and the Women's National Basketball Association to bring Gervin and Smith to India. <http://exchanges.state.gov/sports/index.html>

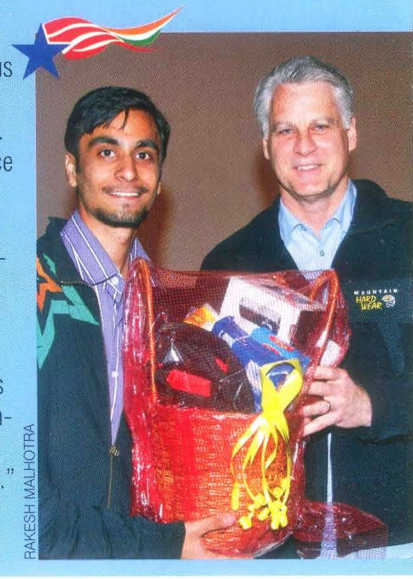


NEWS SCAPE



Rohit Kapoor, the first New Delhi American Center **Facebook fan of the week**, received a gift hamper from Ambassador Timothy J. Roemer on March 1. Kapoor received the hamper, which included a flip cam, T-shirt, backpack and American snack food, at a special screening of the movie, "The Social Network," at the American Center. He was awarded for the best comment on the question, "Why are you a fan of the American Center?"

Kapoor wrote, "American Center brings together the various cultures, individuals, traditions and perceptions of communities. Whether movie screenings, dance show, music concert, book launch etc., the main purpose is to understand society by congregating them at one place. . . . American Center is one and the only place in New Delhi where you can enjoy, learn and express yourself with your full gusto without any obstruction and that's why I am a huge fan of the same." <http://www.facebook.com/americancenternewdelhi>



Kolkata Consul General Beth Payne visited Bhalki village in West Bengal in February where she interacted with the **local community** and inaugurated a project which has turned 954 hectares of barren land into productive cropland. The project was funded by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development. <http://kolkata.usconsulate.gov/index.html>

Courtesy John Cussen



John Cussen, a **Fulbright** lecturer from Edinboro University in Pennsylvania, teaches courses in American literature and critical theory to post-graduate students at Ravenshaw University in Cuttack, Orissa. Cussen has also delivered presentations at Assam University in Silchar and a literature conference in Bhubaneswar. <http://www.usief.org.in>

Connecting Through Dance

The members of Taylor 2, the company of American choreographer **Paul Taylor**, danced at the Sirt Fort Auditorium in New Delhi on February 18, and also performed and held workshops in Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Mumbai. They presented three of Taylor's signature works selected for the India tour: Arden Court, Runes and Esplanade. Taylor 2 also appeared on "Dance India Dance" on Zee TV, where they taught and danced with contestants. www.ptdc.org

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HEMANT BHATNAGAR

